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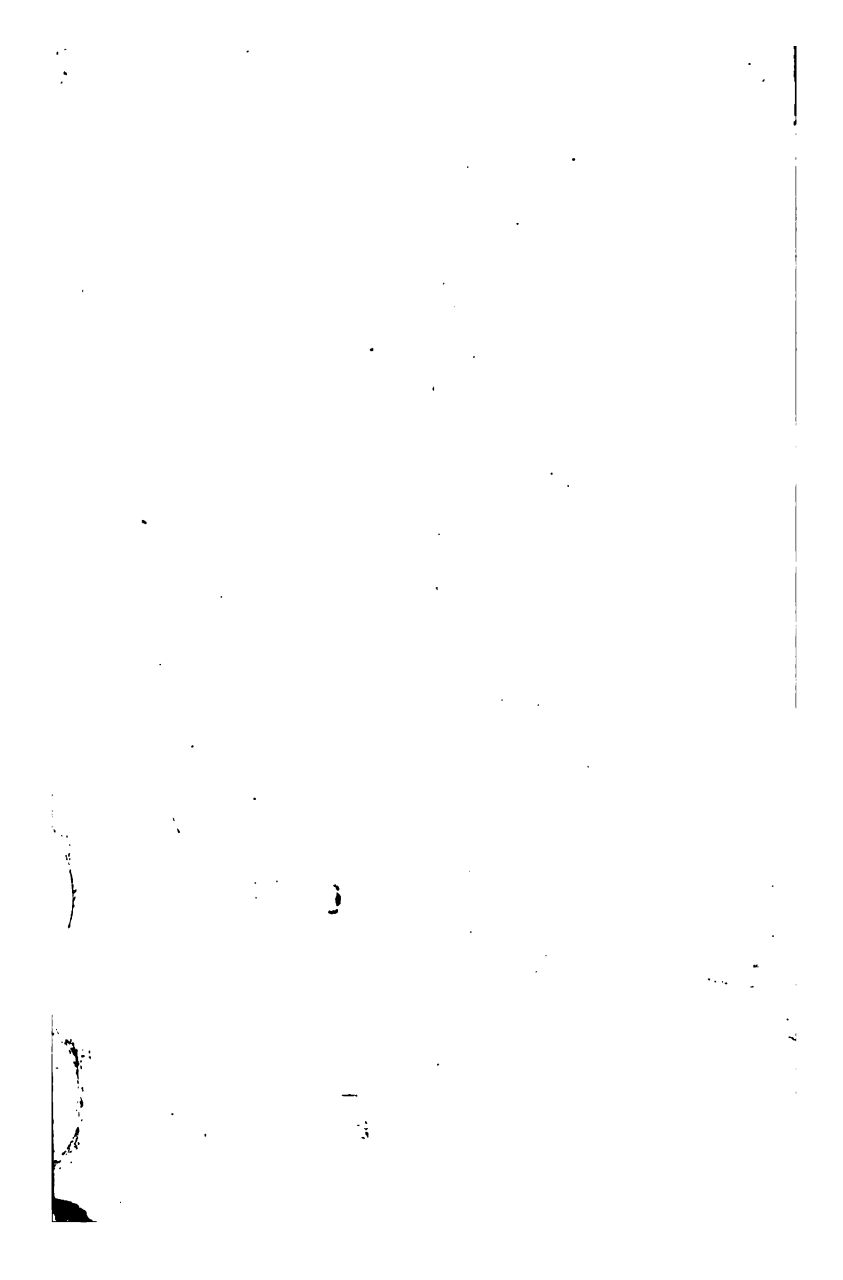
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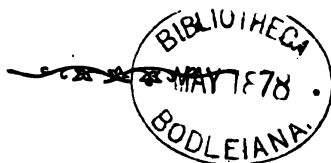
*Spirit-Scenes of the Bible,*

*AND THE LIFE TO COME.*

BY THE

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TO THE  
REV. GEORGE SALMON, D.D.,  
REGIUS PROFESSOR OF DIVINITY IN THE UNIVERSITY  
OF DUBLIN,  
THIS LITTLE VOLUME IS DEDICATED  
BY  
THE AUTHOR,  
IN GRATEFUL REMEMBRANCE OF UNFAILING KINDNESS  
DURING HIS UNIVERSITY CAREER,  
AND IN TOKEN OF  
THE HIGHEST RESPECT AND ESTEEM.






## P R E F A C E .

---

IT has been my intention in the following work to inquire into the condition of man's spirit after death, and to do so independently, if possible.

I have tried to avoid dogmatizing upon a subject into which we can only see "as through a glass, darkly;" but by simple deduction from the glimpses we obtain of it in Holy Writ, and by comparing the probable future with what is or has been already ordered in God's universe around us, to set before the believer's mind a happier, because more distinct forecast than is common, of that which is to be hereafter.

To argue with those who disbelieve in a



future life, or who are not prepared to abide by anything which has been divinely revealed to man, has not been my purpose. It is to Christian believers, in the proper sense of the term, that I address myself; and, therefore, the reader's attention will be directed to two distinct questions, viz. (*a*) the condition of the spirit in its disembodied state succeeding death, and (*b*) the condition of the same spirit in eternity after its reunion with the body. The former of these, as involving the present position of all who have lived and died since the creation of man, necessitates some reference to modern so-called Spiritualism or "Spiritism;" the latter naturally introduces observations upon other spiritual beings, both good and evil. Each will be found to have an important bearing upon the main inquiry of the book.

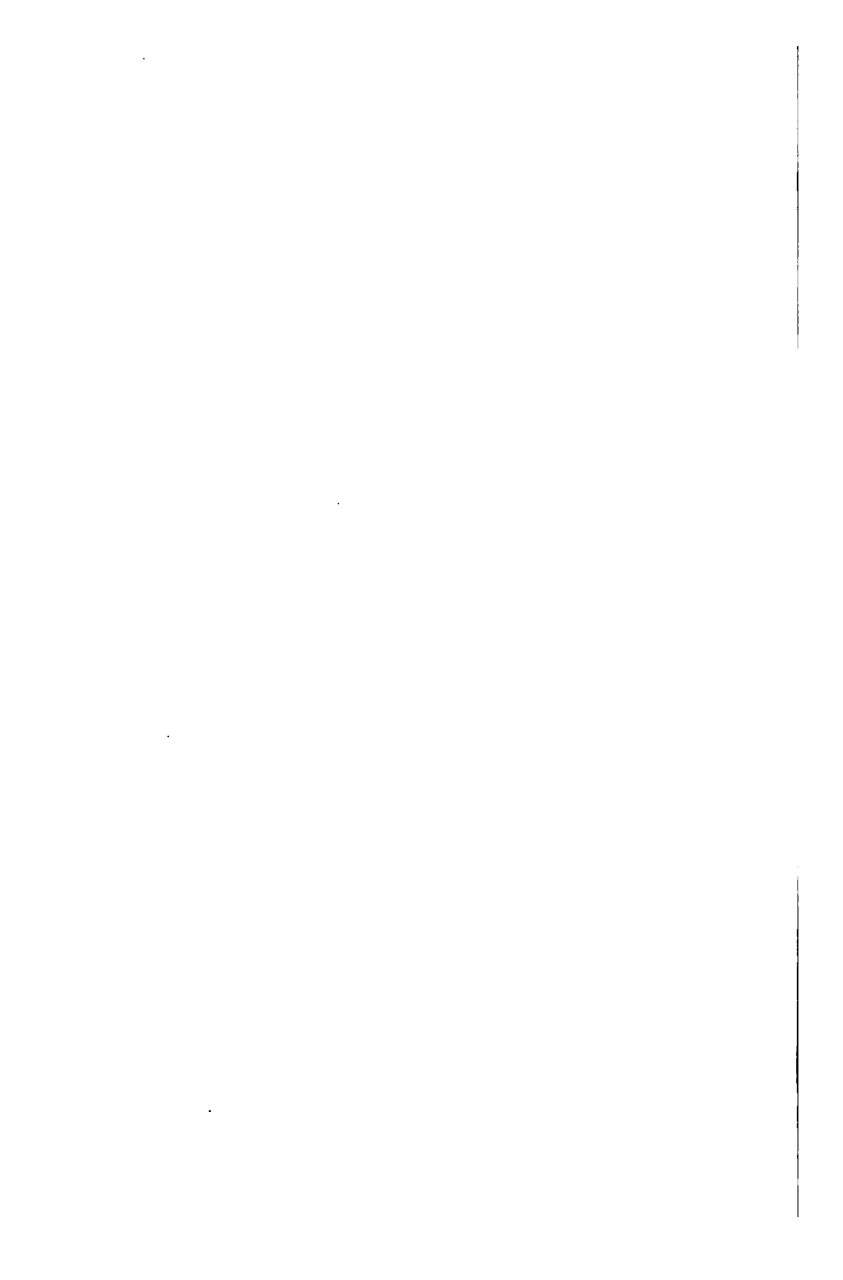
For the rest I need hardly add more by way

of preface. But if the contents of this little volume should prove a source of comfort to any whom Divine grace, working through this world's trials, has led to draw their happiness of mind more from the prospect of the life to come than from this present life, I may say that one object of writing it will have been effected ; and that such may be the result is the author's earnest prayer.

A. R. H.

*Bedford, Easter, 1877.*





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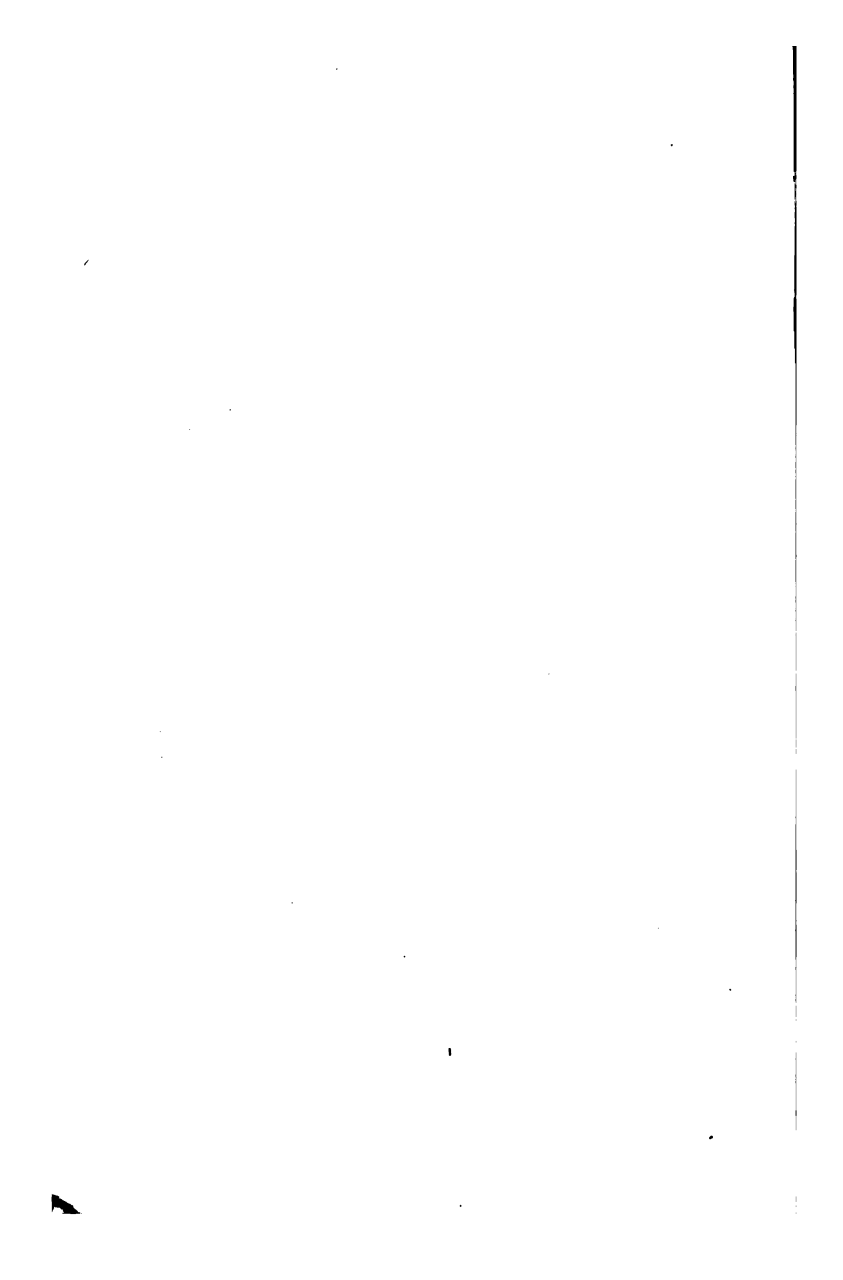
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• •

## Introductory.

• •

“ WOULD’ST thou the life of souls discern ?  
“ Nor human wisdom, nor divine  
“ Helps thee by aught beside to learn ;  
“ Love is life’s only sign.  
“ The spring of the regenerate heart,  
“ The pulse, the glow of every part,  
“ Is the true love of Christ our Lord.  
“ As man embrac’d, as God ador’d.”

# THE SPIRIT-SCENES OF THE BIBLE.

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## CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTORY.

The Future all in all to Man—Time Present only Ideal—  
Man's actual Grasp of Time not unlike that of his Maker—  
Meaning of Expression "God created Man in His own  
Image"—Recovery after Death from Earthly Clogs of the  
Spirit—Death, in fact, a new Birth—No limit to Man's  
Capacity of Comprehension either of Time or of Space.

THE future is at all times the greatest object of interest to man. All his actions are done with reference to the future; and the same remark is true of all his thoughts and of all his words. The subjects upon which he speaks may indeed be past, but the purpose of his speaking is to affect the future. Even men's thoughts cannot dwell upon matters gone by

without having more or less regard to things to come.

We are in the habit of dividing our lives into the past, the present, and the future. But on reflection one may well ask, have we any right to conceive of anything save past and future? The present, if it exist at all, is an interval of time so inappreciably small that we cannot possibly name the exact moment which is neither past nor future. Men draw a circle, as it were, around the nearest portion of life, embracing in part what is gone by, in part the actually passing moment, and in part the closely proximate future, and then as a whole they call it the "present time."

We are told that the Almighty looks upon "a thousand years as one day," and while to rival the immensity of this Divine glance transcends our capacity, the spirit power which achieves this—and being infinite, can achieve a thousandfold the like—does not involve an incomprehensible idea to man, for it is precisely the same kind of grasp, however so inferior it be in degree, which man's spirit is wont to take of the time now passing, when he speaks of time present.

God created man in his own image, and if

this declaration is to be explained in the ordinary acceptance of the words, it must be by saying that man's likeness to God's image is to be found in man's spirit. The resemblance to God the Father could not have been derived from human physical construction. But if we examine into the spirit of man we discover therein a wonderful similarity to that which we believe to be God's nature. And although it is our habit to speak and think of ourselves as finite and limited beings—which we unquestionably are in all that relates to material powers—there is really no limitation to our intellectual and spiritual capacities under favourable circumstances. The ability of man's spirit to admit increase of knowledge upon almost every subject is literally boundless; whilst the probability of his being able to improve in each spiritual excellence to an infinite extent, as soon as freed from all evil influence, may safely be assumed.

When we prepare to consider the state in which the spirit will exist after death, we must eliminate from our view all the ills which in connection with perishable bodies and sinful dispositions in this life hamper and prevent its rise to inherent capability of increasing im-

#### 4      *The Spirit-Scenes of the Bible.*

provement. Physical weakness, disease, misfortune, want of education, social position, may and do oft combine with other causes to render the glorious birth-right of the spirit well-nigh useless, or at least powerless during life on earth.

Nevertheless, just as the features of one who has suffered much pain and partial disfigurement before death, often resume after that event the happy expression of bygone years, so may the long tried and sin defiled spirit recover, on separation from the body, its pristine completeness in power and its intellectual beauty.

Death may become, as it were, a new birth\* into a new life, which shall be equally natural, more happy, and more perfect ; and perhaps to it the apostle's words, descriptive of that change in the soul which all must pass through unto eternal salvation, may with equal justice be applied—"Old things are passed away, behold, all things are become new."

It can be shown to demonstration that on this side of the grave the mind can comprehend no limit being set to the ultimate bounds

\* Admirably expressed in Bishop Butler's "Analogy of Natural and Revealed Religion."



either of space\* or of time;† and if we encourage ourselves to dwell upon these exalting facts, it will be no vain endeavour to try to guess at the extent of the glory which shall in time to come be revealed to the spirits in heaven.

Meantime, let us in the first instance draw from the inspired book what certain evidence it contains of the separate existence of man's spirit after death, and the circumstances in which we must remain until eternity shall begin.

\* See Locke on the Human Understanding.

† The scripture prophecy of an hereafter, when "time shall be no longer" (Rev. x. 6), can only be understood as representing that the present succession of events will be so altered, that the constant longings for the future now occasioned by the unsatisfying nature of earthly life will have ceased to influence the soul. Thus the life to come will afford perfect happiness. There will be no desire that what is actually passing should be exchanged for that which is still unarrived at, and thence will arise the capability of fully enjoying the then present without any reference to that which may succeed it.



. . .

## The future of the Spirit.

. . .

“ HIGH thoughts were with him in that hour  
“ Untold, unspeakable on earth,  
“ And who can stay the soaring power  
“ Of spirits weaned from worldly mirth ;  
“ While far beyond the sound of praise,  
“ With upward eye they float serene,  
“ And learn to bear their Saviour's blaze  
“ When judgment shall withdraw the screen ?”

## CHAPTER II.

### THE FUTURE OF THE SPIRIT.

Meaning of "Intermediate State"—Three Opinions as to its Nature—No Information Given by Persons Raised from the Dead—Dr. Bartle's "Hades and the Atonement"—View Taken in this Book—Conditions of Intermediate State probably vary—Regularity of Natural Laws no Argument against God's Active Government—All Deviations constantly restored by Him.

THE "Intermediate State" is the expression usually employed to denote the existence of the spirit between death and the resurrection. A veil has been by the Divine will kept more or less over this state, but still there are some indications allowed us of its nature. To comprehend these indications aright is universally our desire; and we receive encouragement from the prophetic promise regarding the darkly-revealed things of the future that the "wise shall understand" (Dan. xii. 10). If we can therefore attain to the wisdom thus

honoured, we may hope to reap the reward promised thereto.

There are three extensively received—but strikingly different—opinions as to the nature of the Intermediate State. One is, that man's eternal destiny commences at the moment of death, for weal or woe, and that the spirit at once passes into heaven or hell ; a second is that the spirit falls into a condition of sleep, and so continues until the resurrection ; a third, that the spirit in its disembodied state is placed in a temporary position of happiness or misery, conscious of each surrounding circumstance, and possessing powers akin to those of other spiritual beings, though probably under greater restrictions.

As regards these scarcely reconcileable views it is very remarkable that all uncertainty might have been at an end had any of those individuals who were raised from the dead during our blessed Lord's sojourn upon earth, or on other occasions recorded in the Bible, transmitted an account of what they passed through after leaving the body. That they, notwithstanding, did not give any information appears certain ; and probably in their case all remembrance of the experiences of the

disembodied state was done away with expressly in order that they might be able to resume their former lives without a difference in feeling and responsibility from that of other men. Howsoever this may have been we are left to our own reasoning in the matter, and the several conclusions above mentioned have been made the subject of frequent debate.

In a recent popularly-written book by the Rev. Dr. Bartle, entitled "Hades and the Atonement," the various arguments in favour of each opinion will be found very fully stated. Let it suffice to say here that the first view—that of the spirit entering heaven or hell immediately after death—appears to be not only an unwarranted anticipation of the Day of Judgment, but wholly irreconcilable with the particulars announced both in the Old and New Testaments respecting that dread event. Again, the second view—that the soul enters into a state of sleep until the resurrection—although supported apparently by particular expressions used in many parts of the Bible, is opposed to the representation of the Intermediate State given in the parable of Dives and Lazarus, and also in the Revela-

tion of St. John (Rev. vi. 9—11). The third view—that the soul at death passes into a temporary condition of happiness or misery, incomplete in its nature, because of separation from the body—appears the most consonant with the descriptions just quoted, and which are the strongest evidence we possess on the subject.

It is this latter view which will be advocated in these pages. But here we are struck by the varied exercise of Almighty power in dealing with spirit-life out of the body as well as in the body. There have been exceptions to the universal law of death, and to the dissolution of the human frame before entering into the Intermediate State. In several instances it has been God's will to permit the actual body to disappear from our world, and afterwards—transformed, as we must needs suppose, into one similar to that of the resurrection—to reappear recognisably on subsequent occasions. Of such we have instances in Enoch, Moses, Samuel, and Elijah ; then there were the saints who arose at the moment of Christ's death, and there was our Lord Himself. These are quite distinct from the persons who were raised from the dead, and



restored to human life in its ordinary aspect, with bodies again perishable as before.

Now, if the condition of the disembodied state should prove to be as different in separate instances as the relative positions under which human beings have lived at different periods of the world's history, we need not be surprised. Higher privileges may be given to some than to others, even among the happy ones. And we must surely observe what an all-convincing proof it furnishes us with of the omnipotent authority of our God over all created beings, whether spiritual or material, that He can vary to an unlimited extent the conditions of death and of existence after it.

There are some who would fain draw from the regularity with which the laws of Nature, so-called, ordinarily work, conclusions adverse to the original making and continual supporting of these laws by an actively governing Creator ; but when a miraculous and inexplicable divergence occurs, they do not see that the subsequent re-establishment of the accustomed order of things is an irrefragable evidence that nature is not guided by self-acting powers. The most perfect and ingenious machinery which man ever con-

structed shows its inferiority to the simplest creations of the natural world by this fact, that if once put out of order, it can never of itself recover its correctness again. Man must always forcibly intervene to restore his own handiwork to its operating power. Whereas in God's works no catastrophe ever permanently disarranges the re-acting principle, which keeps animated nature in a constant succession of existence and propagation. In the world of life, whether we take our examples from animals or vegetation, or from mankind, if a monstrosity or unwonted and unnatural form comes into being, we do not find it suffered to propagate itself, and thus interfere with the rules which unite all created things in one harmonious whole.

So in things of heaven as in things of earth. No deviation from Divine laws will take place, without its being in His hand to restore, whose will has caused the temporary aberration from His own established order. Nor will the continuance of things without alteration for ages demonstrate on the other hand that God cannot at any moment change them according to His purpose.

Let us bear these considerations in mind.

We may thus safely follow out the traces afforded to us of the spirit-world in several clear Divine records, and concerning which remarks will be made in the following chapters.





. . .

## Saul and the Witch of Endor.

. . .

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" GOD liveth ever !  
" Wherefore soul, despair thou never !  
" Those whom the thoughtless world forsakes,  
" Who stand bewildered with their woe,  
" God gently to His bosom takes,  
" And bids them all His fulness know.  
" In thy sorrow's swelling flood,  
" Own His Hand, who seeks thy good ;  
" Soul, forget not in thy praise,  
" God o'er all for ever reigns !"

## CHAPTER III.

### SAUL AND THE WITCH OF ENDOR.

The Prophet Samuel's Death and Re-appearance—King Saul's Character and Position—Intercourse with Familiar Spirits—Description of Scene at Endor—Its Close—Conclusions Drawn from Particulars of the Event, as related to us.

THE re-appearance of the prophet Samuel, as described in 1 Sam. xxviii., is one of the recorded events alluded to at the close of the last chapter. Samuel [had been about four years dead, when he was summoned to show himself again upon earth. His departure had not been a translation like that of Enoch, nor a premature removal like that of Moses, whose body was taken away from mortal ken as soon as the soul had quitted it. Samuel died a natural death, and was buried in the ordinary way. His re-appearance, therefore, is one which in all respects may [throw light upon our knowledge of the [intermediate condition

of the spirit, partly from the full description given us of the occurrence itself, and partly from the fact that it is the only one of its kind of which the Bible furnishes the particulars.

The narrative is one which has at all times attracted great attention, from the interest attached to the principal actors in it. Let us briefly recall the attending circumstances. It was the last scene in the life of King Saul. On the following day, his forty years' reign over the kingdom of Israel ended by his death in battle. Saul was a man who, commencing with good intentions, and for some time acting with resolution in the cause of truth, had nevertheless fallen into great sin, and had incurred special punishment as a consequence. His character was neither a very bad nor a very uncommon one; but the high responsibilities of his position, and the honour which had been conferred in his selection as the first king of Israel by Divine authority, had caused his subsequent acts of disobedience to incur a marked penalty at several periods of his life.

How far the repentance which Saul expressed on various occasions was genuine we have no means of judging; but it is certain



that his mind was extremely unhappy, and that he was in the greatest possible perplexity at the time of which we speak. Saul undoubtedly showed considerable anxiety at different times to obtain God's guidance for his conduct, and never more strikingly than at this closing term of his chequered life.

In those days, answers of a direct nature were frequently given to persons who earnestly sought them ; and it would seem that Saul had been perseveringly urgent in his efforts to secure a reply to his prayers. The Philistines had invaded the kingdom in greater strength apparently than usual, for Saul was quite afraid to encounter them. An assurance of aid from on high was needful to rouse his own failing heart, and the courage of his men. Yet "neither by dreams nor by Urim nor by prophets" was the Almighty willing to vouchsafe any response to Saul. Thus arose the temptation, which proved too strong for the unfortunate king's faith and patience, and led him into the fatal error of seeking direction for his conduct from the dead.

Intercourse with "familiar" and probably evil spirits was then, and has been at all times more or less frequently resorted to in secret

by wrong-minded persons. Doubtless much of it was connected with imposture, having been mostly prevalent where the greatest ignorance prevailed. But, at the same time, a considerable amount of reality must have existed, when the terrible doom of death was by the law of God (Lev. xx. 6, 27) to be carried out in all cases against those who were guilty of witchcraft or necromancy.

That Saul believed in the potency of such intercourse is plain from the sequel. He had, however, done his duty hitherto in enforcing the law of death against necromancers, and had so thoroughly freed the land from these transgressors that, when in his extremity, he determined to have recourse to sorcery himself, it was difficult to find any through whom access to the spirit world might be obtained. At Endor notwithstanding, in a wild country not far from where the Israelitish army lay encamped, Saul's servants informed him that there lived a woman who had a familiar spirit. The king determined to consult her without delay, but as he could not for very shame go openly, in defiance of his own legal prohibitions, the darkness of night afforded the only safe opportunity. Saul also went in disguise,

lest if he were recognized, the wretched woman should be afraid to exercise her evil art. With two companions the king made his way over the mountains of Gilboa to his destination. Amid rocks and bushes, by mayhap little trodden paths, under the mountain shadow, they silently approached the lonely dwelling.

Accustomed as the witch of Endor assuredly would be to secret and unlooked-for visits, she yet was startled by the sight of those who now suddenly aroused her. The chief figure was a man of gigantic stature, though he looked downcast, miserable, and worn. There was a kingly bearing, but there were no ensigns of royalty to be seen, and the man spoke in terms of entreaty. Fearing, then, to put herself into the power of these strangers, the woman reminded them that to do what they asked of her would be to risk her life at the king's hands, for she suspected that the visit might be made for the purpose of betraying her.

But this reluctance was speedily overcome; an assurance of safety and probably of ample reward from Saul, sufficed to attain his object. Having been desired to summon the prophet Samuel from the dead, the woman speedily

put herself into communication with the spirit world, and thereupon beholding a terrific vision, which made her cry aloud with terror, discovered who it was that stood before her.

“And the woman spake to Saul, saying, ‘Why hast thou deceived me? for thou art Saul.’ And the king said unto her, ‘Be not afraid, for what sawest thou?’ And the woman said unto Saul, ‘I saw gods ascending out of the earth.’ And he said unto her, ‘What form is he of?’ And she said, ‘An old man cometh up; and he is covered with a mantle.’ And Saul perceived that it was Samuel, and he stooped with his face to the ground, and bowed himself. And Samuel said to Saul, ‘Why hast thou disquieted me to bring me up?’ And Saul answered, ‘I am sore distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more, neither by prophets nor by dreams; therefore I have called thee, that thou mayest make known unto me what I shall do.’”

Then follows the stern prophetic reply of Samuel, wherein Saul's former disobedience is recalled, and his quickly approaching death is

announced in the fearful words, "To-morrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me."

The close of the scene was what might be anticipated—"And Saul fell straightway all along upon the earth" (or as the Bible margin has it—"fell with the fulness of his stature,") and was sore afraid because of the words of Samuel; and there was no strength in him, for he had eaten no bread all the day, nor all the night."

What further happened we need not dwell upon. The woman of Endor, and the king's companions, may or may not have heard the words spoken to Saul; for when the Apostle of the same name had a vision of the Lord Jesus upon the road to Damascus, he said that those who were with him saw the light from heaven, but heard not the words of Him that spake; and similarly, in one of the prophet Daniel's visions, referred to hereafter. So it may have been here. As soon, however, as it was perceived that the spirit intercourse was at an end, they hastened to raise the king, and to relieve his bodily wants.

No sympathy had reached the unhappy monarch from the realms unseen; and thither, ere another sun had set, he was doomed to

depart, wounded in battle with the Philistines, and finally slain with his own suicidal hand. The inspired historian sums up the sentence executed by the Divine will upon King Saul in these words—"So Saul died for his transgression which he committed against the Lord," . . . "and also for asking counsel of one that had a familiar spirit to enquire of it" (1 Chron. x. 13).

The story having been given in all its solemn fulness, was plainly intended as a warning, and a warning it ought to remain, even to the end of time, to all who would attempt a like sin. Nevertheless, we may derive some important information from it, for the following facts are distinctly set forth in the course of this strange history, viz. :—

1. That it was possible for one that had a familiar spirit to summon from the abode of the departed any spirit whatever—apparently at will. Saul said to the witch of Endor, "*Bring me him up whom I shall name unto thee.*" And on being asked whom it should be, and Saul having named the prophet Samuel, his request was instantly complied with.

2. That it was by means of the familiar

spirit, and not by direct communication, that the dead were summoned. Saul said, "*Divine unto me by the familiar spirit.*"

3. That the spirit so called up did not come voluntarily, but appeared under some sort of compulsion, and in disturbance of a state of satisfactory repose, as is shown by Samuel's remonstrance, "*Why hast thou disquieted me to bring me up*"?

4. That the re-appearing spirit came in the form and dress—to human eyes—of a man in the same stage of life as that in which he died —"*An old man cometh up, and he is covered with a mantle.*"

5. That the prophetic inspiration with which Samuel had been gifted during life was continued after death, so that he was enabled to speak with the same foresight of the future as before; and also that a perfect remembrance remained of what had passed between the king and himself, by means of which he could at once address Saul upon the subject of his past conduct.

6. That wherever, and under whatsoever conditions of existence Samuel was placed, Saul and his sons were to join him immediately that they died.

28.     *The Spirit-Scenes of the Bible.*

If we may take these various striking particulars as applicable in general to spirits of men in the Intermediate State, there is much that will confirm the views drawn from the other re-appearances of which we shall presently speak ; and above all, from the allegorical story of Dives and Lazarus. To enter upon the latter will require a fresh chapter ; but the review of the soul-thrilling incident at Endor would seem a fitting introduction to the remarks originally promised on the subject of Spiritualism, which accordingly will next occupy our attention.





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## **Micah's Vision—Spiritualism.**

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“ FIGHT the good fight of faith, nor turn aside  
“ Through fear of peril from or earth or hell ;  
“ Take to thee now the armour proved and tried ;  
“ Take to thee spear and sword ; oh ! wield them well !  
“ So shalt thou conquer here, to win the day,  
“ To wear the crown when this hard life has passed away.”

## CHAPTER IV.

### MICAHIAH'S VISION—SPIRITUALISM.

What Spiritualism consists in—Whether reality or imposture—Likeness to the latter—Danger of deception by Spirits—Spirit-scene described by Micaiah, and circumstances leading to it—Possible consequences of Spiritualistic researches—Our duty in reference to it.

SPIRITUALISM is one of the most remarkable movements of the present age. It possesses a widely-extending influence, both in this country and in America. Nor can such a movement as this be looked upon with indifference, whether we consider it to be an imposture or a reality. The spiritualists claim to hold intercourse through their media with the spirits of the dead, to produce various startling phenomena, and to effect spirit-cures,—*i.e.*, to give relief from bodily diseases—also through the agency of the said spirits. Some of them express the utmost repugnance to the Holy Bible, whilst others declare that

spiritualism will yet prove itself the strongest ally to religious belief by furnishing irrefragable proofs of the invisible power which rules the universe.

In so far as the system has been one of imposture—which in very many instances cannot be denied, even by its advocates—there would be no need to allude to it in connection with the subject-matter of this book ; but in so far as it may be, and probably is, in some cases a reality, serious considerations force themselves upon our minds.

No movement of the kind seems ever before to have taken so wide a range ; and if it continues to spread, the results may, for aught we know, be connected with coming changes in the relationship of mankind to the unseen world, or at least with a relaxing of the limitations which have prevailed since the early part of the Christian era.

Howsoever this may be, and whatever variation may exist in the *modus operandi*, the chief purpose of the ancient witchcraft and necromancy has always been the same as that professed by the spiritualists now, namely, to establish communications with the spirits of the departed. That such intercourse should be

conducted in so gross and astonishing a mode as by the sound of rappings, made without any visible agency upon material objects in ordinary household use, is *prima facie* totally opposed to the probability of there being anything more than an imposture concerned; and that the conversation, when alleged to be carried on, should consist of questions and answers upon the most commonplace and futile, if not frivolous, subjects, bears strongly against all our natural conception of the solemnity which should be expected to attend the near and known presence of purely spiritual beings.

Compare with such methods of procedure the description given in the book of Job (iv., 13-18) of the effect upon the human frame and mind of a true interview with a spirit :—  
“Fear came upon me and trembling which made all my bones to shake; then a spirit passed before my face; the hair of my flesh stood up; it stood still, but I could not discern the form thereof; an image was before mine eyes, there was silence, and I heard a voice saying, ‘Shall mortal man be more just than God; shall a man be more pure than his maker?’”

Does this accord with the idea of a company of curiosity—one might almost say of pleasure—assembling around the social table where “manifestations” are expected? Spiritualists indeed tell us that there are spirits of various degrees of intelligence and power; and, from their accounts, it might be conjectured that the “lower order of spirits”—to use their own expression—would, if they actually do appear, be less awe-inspiring towards man than the higher orders. Here, then, we are led to an important question—Is it truly with the spirits of the dead that the intercourse referred to is being attempted to be held? Is it not more probably with a different class of beings who, although neither angels nor devils, may have power—like the familiar spirit of the witch at Endor—to communicate with and summon the spirits of the dead, and whose functions may be oftener those of deception than otherwise? What means do the spiritualists possess of ascertaining the nature, or of testing the truthfulness, of the beings whose utterances they believe themselves to receive? Are not the spirits—supposing them to be other than well-disposed—likely to be more than a match for any intelligence or acumen which mortal

man, in his earthly condition, can exert in dealing with them? It being solely by Divine overruling permission that the spirits can do anything, and the highest warnings and penalties having been denounced in the old and new dispensations—see Exod. xxii. 18., and Rev. xxi. 8.—against every attempt to meddle with them, is it to be expected that they would be sent forth to do any benefit to those who unlawfully seek them?

A remarkable spirit-scene has been related in 1 Kings xxii. 19-23, which all would do well to reflect upon in connection with this. It is the story of the way in which the death of the wicked Ahab, King of Israel, was brought to pass. We may marvel on reading the passage, but no figurative interpretation can explain it away; and remembering the expressions used in reference to Pharaoh, when being lured to his own destruction, there seems no reasonable ground for refusing to accept the literal rendering of the passage.

In all these things it must be borne in mind that the true interpretation of what we read is to be ascertained, not by our own pre-formed notion of what is or is not correct, but by the inherent authority of the sacred writer,

and by the absence of discrepancy between it and other Scriptural or Divine testimony. The prophet Micaiah's vision is not inconsistent with those presented to us by St. John in the Apocalypse ; and it is quite in accord with that pictured in Job i., and again in Zech. iii.

Consider the circumstances. The Kings of Israel and Judah had, on the proposal of the former, agreed to unite their forces against a common enemy, the King of Syria. But ere they had begun their march, Jehoshaphat, the King of Judah, desired that inquiry should be made in the customary manner—of which we spoke in the last chapter—as to whether the blessing of Jehovah would attend their enterprise, if persevered in. Hereupon Ahab, with apparent willingness, called together a large number of prophets—four hundred in all—to ask their aid in the consultation. How far these men merited the designation of prophets of the Lord, while they manifestly spoke not from His mouth, it is difficult to determine. But whatever their profession might be, the King of Judah saw through the attempt they made to gratify their master with a lying tale, and he urged



the calling of one who was known to be a true and fearless servant of the Most High.

Micaiah was therefore summoned; his coming was eagerly watched, and some there were who ran to tell him of the unanimity with which the other prophets had spoken in favour of King Ahab's design. To them Micaiah replied that only what the Lord of Hosts should say unto him would he consent to speak. Nevertheless, in mockery, as is evident, the prophet's first answer to Ahab was precisely what had been already given,—“Go and prosper, for the Lord shall deliver the city (Ramoth-gilead) into the hand of the king.”

Ahab then solemnly adjured Micaiah to tell him nothing but truth in the name of the Lord, and instantly received a very different reply. First announcing in unmistakeable figure the wicked king's death—“I saw all Israel scattered upon the hills, as sheep that have not a shepherd,”—and not heeding an angry interruption from Ahab, Micaiah proceeded with his terrible revelation: “Hear thou therefore the word of the Lord; I saw the Lord sitting on His throne, and all the host of heaven standing by Him on His right

hand and on His left. And the Lord said, Who shall persuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead? And one said on this manner, and another said on that manner. And there came forth a spirit, and stood before the Lord, and said, I will persuade him. And the Lord said unto him, Wherewith? And he said, I will go forth, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And He said, Thou shalt persuade him, and prevail also: go forth, and do so. Now therefore, behold, the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and the Lord hath spoken evil concerning thee."

We need not go further into the issue and the fulfilment of Micaiah's momentous prophecy. Nor need we inquire who and what manner of spirits among the "host of heaven" they were whose mission from thence it was to act the part assigned in the above narration. The instance is not a solitary one, for in Ps. lxxviii. 49 we are distinctly told that "evil angels" were sent by Jehovah to cause trouble among the Egyptians; also that an evil spirit from God troubled King Saul (1 Sam. xvi. 14). But if in the prophetic

descriptions of later and perhaps still future times, there is again warning notice to be found of spirits permitted to deceive the dwellers upon earth (1 Tim. iv. 1), may we not well press upon all who are disposed to think lightly or favourably of spiritualistic tenets\* and practices, to weigh solemnly the declarations just quoted from God's book?

Spiritualists may indeed be allowed to discover facts of interest to the philosopher; it may be the reward of their unhallowed researches to find that on earth we are surrounded with spirit life, and that all nature is linked with the unseen, even as insect and infusorial creatures—little suspected by the unscientific—swarm in and about almost every substance we have to do with. The knowledge that would in proper time reach our own emancipated spirits after death, may be anticipated by living men. But if to err in matters of faith is to peril the soul's salvation, and if

\* Among the shocking views put forth by some spiritualists, is that of *re-incarnation*, according to which men's spirits after death are supposed to return to the world to occupy human bodies, and pass through life on earth a second time! Redemption would thus be rendered vain, present responsibility done away with, and the hope of heaven jeopardized!

to persevere in sinful conduct is to render reconciliation with God through the sacrifice of His Incarnate Son impossible, then will all who would fain partake in heaven of the life to come, refrain from the counsel of those who bid them seek "for the living to the dead" (Isa. viii. 19).



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**The Transfiguration—Re-appearance  
of Saints.**

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**" GIVE me the wings of faith to rise,  
" Within the veil, and see  
" The saints above, how great their joys,  
" How bright their glories be."**

## CHAPTER V.

### THE TRANSFIGURATION—RE-APPEARANCE OF SAINTS.

Moses and Elijah—Their Departure from Earth—Re-appearance, apparently corporeal, not certainly so—Special Revelations from Transfiguration Scene—Bodily Return of Saints at the Death of Christ—Millenium—Recognition—Possibility of Revisits from the Departed.

REVERTING to our subject, we are next led to touch upon the re-appearance of Moses and Elijah, in the scene of our blessed Lord's transfiguration. This event is a prominent one in the Gospel narrative. It has been related by each of the three first evangelists, but most in detail by St. Luke (ix. 28-36). Moses and Elijah present to us a glorious idea of the possible condition of man's spirit in the Intermediate State ; yet there were in their case some very peculiar circumstances.

Moses had not died the common death of men, and his body had been buried by divine

interposition (Deut. xxxiv. 5-7), whereupon a strange contest had arisen between the spirit princes of light and of darkness, as mentioned by St. Jude in his epistle. According to some writers, the object of the archangel Michael was to preserve the body of Moses expressly for the re-appearance on Mount Tabor. To assert this is, however, more than the Bible warrants us in doing. The death of Moses was entirely without parallel.

Elijah was, on the contrary, carried up bodily from the earth in view of Elisha, his successor in the prophetic office, and his human body would therefore seem to have been borne with him into the place of spirits, thus rendering his position totally different from that of all others before the ascension of Christ, excepting, probably, Enoch. Whether in these instances the perishable body was changed into one like that of the resurrection, and in that condition admitted to the same locality with the disembodied spirits, or whether these favoured individuals were consigned to some other place of existence, we do not know and cannot possibly determine. Nor can we omit to observe that the three apostles, Peter, James, and John, who were



present at the transfiguration, though quite aware of who the beings in glory were that conversed with their Divine Master, do not seem to have had any tangible evidence afforded them of Moses and Elijah having their human bodies on the Mount. In many of the angelic appearances described in the Old Testament, proof of corporeal form was supplied, as well as by the Lord Jesus Himself after his resurrection—"Handle Me," saith He, "and see ; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see Me have." But as far as the several accounts of the transfiguration go, this important point—as concerning the spirits in the Intermediate State—is left undecided.

While the reality of Moses and Elijah's spirits being present is indubitable on the faith of the sacred record, the splendid beauty of external figure in which they were seen might only have been what the ancient Greeks would have termed an "Eidolon," or the Latins a "Simulacrum." And the same remark would apply to the description of Samuel's reappearance which has already been before our readers.

The special features revealed by the trans-

figuration may be discerned in (1) the exalted privileges and foreknowledge accorded to some of the souls who have departed hence in the favour of God ; and (2) in the heavenly surroundings which these happy spirits enjoyed. Moses and Elijah were permitted to converse with the Son of God Himself, as such, on the subject of the approaching redemption of man by his sacrifice at Jerusalem. They were not in a state of sleep or of indifference to passing events, nor were they in a place of gloom, secluded from all connection with mortal concerns ; but they appeared on the Mountain of Israel "in glory," with shining and brilliant apparel, to meet their Lord, who showed Himself in like celestial radiance for their reception. The presence of God the Father in person was added to the sublime interview, when from the cloud which overshadowed and finally removed the heavenly visitors from mortal sight, came the voice of instruction :—"This is my beloved Son, hear ye Him."

We now pass to the first distinctly-recorded return of human spirits to the earth *with their bodies*. This came to pass at the time of our Lord's crucifixion, and is described by St.

Matthew in connection with other marvellous portents—the darkening of the sun, the earthquake, and the rending of the Temple veil—in the following words:—"The graves were opened, and many bodies of the saints which slept arose and came out of the graves after His resurrection and went into the holy city and appeared unto many" (Matt. xxvii. 52-54).

Being so very remarkable an occurrence, it is surprising that more attention has not been drawn to it. For here we have a clearly corporeal resurrection; one that extended to a considerable number of persons, and one to which there were numerous witnesses, consisting of persons in Jerusalem to whom the returned saints showed themselves. We have also the interesting conjunction of a rising from the dead of saints, *i.e.*, persons who died in faith, with that of Christ Himself; affording an example and earnest, as it were, of that first resurrection hereafter, in which he that shall partake is pronounced to be "blessed and holy" (Rev. xx. 6).

Of this latter event, distinguished from the general resurrection, and intended to precede it by a thousand years—the duration of Christ's personal reign on earth—it is plain that the

Apostle Paul speaks when he says (1 Thess. iv. 14) "Them that sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him," that is to say, with Christ on His return to this world. In like manner the lesser resurrection of saints which preceded that of our Lord was not shared in by unbelievers departed. The use of the word "saints" precludes the possibility of that.

It has been remarked on this passage that the risen saints must have been such as had not been long dead ; because they could not otherwise have been recognised by the people to whom they showed themselves. But the supposition is not necessary, for it might with equal truth be objected that Moses and Elijah could not have been recognised by the apostles at the transfiguration, after having been dead for hundreds of years. Yet there were means of some kind or other employed to secure the recognition of the two prophets, and there is no reason why that of the saints, on their re-appearance, should not have been rendered equally certain. This point, however, is of minor importance.

How long the returned souls were permitted to remain, and whether on their departure they went back to the same places of

rest from which they came, has not been communicated to us. Their stay may not improbably have lasted to the extent of the Lord's own sojourn of forty days, and their appearances in the holy city may have been, like His, repeated [at intervals during that period. This [much at least we may safely conclude, as bearing upon the condition of spirits in the intermediate state—that on fitting, though rare occasions, and under circumstances of sufficient restriction, the spirit of man in corporeal form may, under God's will, be allowed to revisit the scenes of his mortal life. Surprising as this latter statement may appear, even to those disposed to believe in revisits of spirits from the unseen world, the observations which will be made in a future chapter on the appearances of angels and on Christ's resurrection body will justify the remark, or at least deprive it of antecedent improbability.



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**Gibes and Lazarus.**  
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“ WHEN down the o’erwhelming current toss’d,  
“ Just ere he sink for ever lost,  
“ The sailor’s untried arms are cross’d  
“ In agonizing prayer, will ocean cease her strife?  
  
“ Sighs that exhaust, but not relieve,  
“ Heart-rending sighs, O spare to heave  
“ A bosom freshly taught to grieve  
“ For lavished hours and love mis-spent !”



## CHAPTER VI.

## DIVES AND LAZARUS.

Parable of Dives and Lazarus, a Representation of the Intermediate State, not one of Sleep—Figures of Scripture often perplexing—Mistakes made in dealing with them—Remarks on Parables—Particulars of this one—Conclusions deferred.

THE story of Dives and Lazarus supplies the most complete picture we find anywhere in the Bible of the future of man's spirit after death. The particulars revealed by it are a great difficulty in the way of those who contend that we shall have to sleep until the resurrection; indeed, they appear quite incompatible with that idea. At the same time, this narration being a parable, attempts are readily made to get rid of the obstacles by representing them to be figurative.

How to deal with the figures of the sacred records has always been more or less perplexing. But it is necessary to bear in mind the

distinction between figurative descriptions and the figures or types themselves. Of the former we have numerous examples in the parables, and in that under our notice among the rest ; the latter may be met with in some of the prophetic announcements of the Revelation of St. John, and in such scenes as some of those pictured to us by Daniel and Ezekiel. Too often both figures and figurative descriptions have been treated with less earnestness than they deserve. The clothing, so to speak, of the figure being imaginative, its substance has been viewed as if unreal, and thus almost as though it had been false. Whereas we may rest assured that nothing is put before us in the Bible as descriptive of what occurred or was seen—parabolic stories excepted—that did not actually occur, and was not actually seen, however ineffectually the language used may convey to our minds a comprehensible delineation thereof. Sometimes the obscurity has obviously been intentional, and purposed to yield only to prayerful and diligent investigation ; in other cases the concealment has been intended apparently to last until the final revealing of all secrets to the spirit dwellers in the world to come. What we

have to guard against is that we do not miss the right interpretation for want of sufficient care, and that we do not assume without authority that any given figure, or figurative description, is not true in the literal acceptation of the words. The explanations afforded in the Bible itself (Dan. ii., iv., v., &c., Matt. xiii.) of several figures and parables should be a guide not only to those so expounded, but to the others left still veiled.

In *Dives and Lazarus* we have evidently a parable, as regards the facts narrated, and a figurative description, as regards the features developed in the scene. The story so nearly resembles in its character the many parables related by our blessed Lord, that there is no reason to suppose it to be a detail of circumstances that had happened in reality; while on the other hand, such expressions as those of the rich man, imploring that Lazarus might "dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my burning tongue," and the reply of Abraham, "between us and you there is a great gulf fixed,"—may be considered a figurative description of certain positive truths. Everyone will agree to this, but it is not safe on that account to pro-

nounce hastily what these truths are. When various parables—of which this was not one—were explained by Jesus Christ to His faithful disciples, He expressly said in answer to their questions as to why other hearers were not admitted to the same privileges and benefit as themselves, "Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but unto them it is not given," (Matt. xiii. 11), and added, "That seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand."

Thus it is evident that under particular conditions, the hearers of parables, and perhaps, we may add, the readers likewise, were shut out from the capability of rightly entertaining their contents. Let us, therefore, enter upon the examination with all humility; and although we may think we can discern the correct interpretation, let us refrain from condemning any to whom the same view may not equally commend itself. The words of the parable need not be quoted in full here, as the chapter in which they are found (Luke xvi. 19-31) is familiar to all readers, and can be referred to, if required.

The life of the rich man and the life of the poor man are presented to us in contrast,

easily verified by examples from the daily life. Nothing is said of the state of mind of either individual, but we are left apparently to conclude that the outward ease and prosperity of Dives were accompanied by a corresponding inward happiness which was denied to Lazarus, whose worldly circumstances were so indicative of misery and suffering. Death was to each the beginning of a wonderful change. The soul of Lazarus was immediately conveyed by angels to "Abraham's bosom," that is to say, into the society and close companionship of the "Father of the Faithful," whereas the soul of Dives speedily found itself consigned to "hell"—in the original, "Hades"—where he is described as "being in torments."

Then follows a thrilling conversation. The rich man is able from his place of punishment to recognise "afar off" his poor neighbour, and to see that he is in a position of happiness, along with the patriarch Abraham, whom he also recognises. This mutual recognition is one of the remarkable features of the parable. But Dives, notwithstanding what has befallen him, appears still to look upon Lazarus as an inferior being, and calls to

Abraham, addressing the latter with respectful entreaty, to ask that Lazarus may be sent to relieve his bodily agony by the bestowal of a little water. Here it is plain that the rich man did not feel able to change his own locality for another, nor to do anything for his own personal alleviation on the spot, although he deemed it possible for Lazarus to come to him. The request of Dives, however, is at once refused. He is reminded, in the first place, that a reversal of their respective states in life is fair to both after death ; and, in the second place, Dives is informed that there are inseparable obstacles to any going to and fro, or interchange of the souls' location.

The rich man is not yet satisfied. Though selfish and unconverted, he is not heartless to his relatives, whom he remembers after his departure from earth—another fact to be noted. Another petition ascends from Dives' lips, to the effect that Lazarus might be sent to warn his brethren, who were yet on earth, of the danger they would incur by following in his footsteps. Hereupon Abraham suggests that sufficient testimony is already before them in that of Moses and the prophets ; and to the rich man's reply that a spirit returning from

the dead would have more influence, the great example of believers terminates all further remonstrance by declaring that if those on earth will not hearken to the written oracles of God, "neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead."

That in this last sentence there is a reference to the anticipated effect of Christ's rising from the grave is probable ; but it also shows that a return of a particular individual from the regions of death was not in itself deemed anything impossible. Both the speakers in the narrative looked upon it as a matter of course. Nor does it appear possible to view the parable as relating to a final condition of the soul of man. The clear statements in other parts of Scripture, and especially in the teaching of our Lord Himself about the judgment day and the general resurrection, forbid our doing so. We dare not in any instance so explain the sacred writings as to make them contradict themselves. To question their mutual concord would be to question their inspiration, and to destroy their claim to authority with us. By the reference made to the continuance of worldly concerns in their ordinary course with the relations of Dives,

we see that nothing was supposed to have taken place to alter the present state of things.

We have, therefore, every ground to draw a variety of interesting conclusions from the story of Dives and Lazarus as to what the intermediate state of man's soul or spirit is, and these may fairly enable us to sum up what can be derived from the other portions of Holy Scripture, which we have remarked upon previously. What the said conclusions may be will be learned in the ensuing chapter.





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## **The Intermediate State.**

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**“ REST, weary head !**

**“ Lie down to slumber in the peaceful tomb,**

**“ Light from above has broken through its gloom ;**

**“ Here, in the place where once thy Saviour lay,**

**“ Where He shall waken thee on a future day,**

**“ Like a tired child upon its mother's breast,**

**“ Rest, sweetly rest !”**

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE INTERMEDIATE STATE.

Six Questions proposed for Solution—Old-fashioned Ideas the most Satisfactory—Scripture Support of Them—The First Resurrection and its Probable Distance off—Locality of the Intermediate State—Condition of Sleep or otherwise—No Change after Death—Communication between Saved and Lost Improbable—Knowledge of Earthly Affairs not Unlikely—Re-appearance of Spirits Discussed—Eternity more Important than Preceding Interval.

We are now properly face to face with the question of the Intermediate State. In what locality do the spirits of men exist between death and the resurrection? Are they in a state of sleep? Do they undergo any change? Are the saved and the lost in communication with each other? Is there any knowledge among them of what is passing upon earth? Have the disembodied spirits power to appear to mankind if they desire to do so? All these, and many more inquiries may readily be made.

without either unreasonable or unlawful curiosity. Let us endeavour to meet them in truth and honesty, for it is manifest that a distinct categorical answer cannot be given to each.

In advance, we may quote the remark that to an earnest Christian mind the common, and—if we may use the term,—old-fashioned idea that each soul at death departs at once to heaven or hell, and that there is no interval of suspense or waiting for a more advanced destiny thereafter, is, after all that can be said, the most satisfactory. To such as have experienced the new birth in Christ Jesus, it must bring more or less disappointment to feel that their long-desired admission to perfect happiness will be deferred for a period of which we can but guess at the length, and which must, under any event, continue a great number of years. In this case, to rely upon the Divine testimony is our duty ; and if the purport of that evidence can be discerned in its integrity, not only will error be avoided, but a compensating discovery will be sure to follow, and the believer's mind will be relieved from sadness.

Happily for us, the assurance thus given can be verified to a considerable degree. The pious

dead, or in other words, the souls that have been saved, wherever they go to, appear to meet with immediate conscious happiness. They are literally "in joy and felicity," as the Church of England burial service expresses it. From the story of Dives and Lazarus we see that Abraham, as well as Lazarus, was happy ; from the Transfiguration scene we learn that Moses and Elias were in glory ; in the narrative of the re-appearance of Samuel we are informed that he was unwilling to be disturbed from the blissful rest in which he was placed. Our Lord, in addressing the penitent thief upon the cross, gave him the promise of being that very day removed to Paradise ; and St. Paul, in the utterance of his longing for delivery from the anxieties and sufferings of life speaks of being "present with the Lord," when the time should arrive for his being "absent from the body" (2 Cor. v. 8). And although the Lord Jesus is believed to be more specially known in His bodily presence in heaven, still the abode of the departed spirits of the righteous may well be imagined to enjoy a more realisable nearness than is granted by Him to His people on earth.

Another source of satisfaction to the believer

is to be derived from the prophecy in the Revelation (xx. 4-6) as to the first resurrection. When Christ shall return to reign for a thousand years—albeit this reign may not imply that He will show Himself in corporeal form—the souls of the righteous are to be raised from the dead ; while the resurrection of the wicked will not take place until after the thousand years are expired. Thus the duration of an inferior state of happiness will be shortened for the good ; and the final extreme of punishment for the evil will mercifully be delayed a further period.

Again, it has been a widely prevalent opinion in all ages, that the world would last seven thousand years from the creation of Adam, of which number nearly six thousand have already passed ; and if we judge solely from the physical difficulty inseparable from the unlimited increase of mankind rapidly extending upon a globe of limited area, the habitable parts of which must in time become overfilled and unable to support its occupants, a close of the present system might be computed to occur in about eleven hundred years hence. Supposing then that the millennial reign will occupy the last thousand years of the earth's

existence as a home for man, the first resurrection of the dead would be a comparatively near event to look forward to. But we are only justified in introducing these reflections by the desire to soften and mellow the haze which hangs over our present view of the Intermediate State. Returning to the questions with which this chapter opened, we have to consider—

1. *In what locality do the spirits of men exist between death and the resurrection?*

To this question no certain answer can be given. The place, indeed, bears a name, in the Hebrew "Sheol," and in the Greek "Hades"; but where it is, we are not told in the Bible. In the work of Dr. Bartle on "Hades and the Atonement," we are certainly informed that it must be "*underneath the earth*," by which expression is presumably implied the interior of the earth's substance, for no one possessing the slightest knowledge of what the earth is, and of how it moves on its orbit, would apply the term "underneath" to any locality exterior to the earth's surface. Dr. Bartle's opinion is grounded on the description of the swallowing up alive of Korah and his company in the earth (Numb. xvi. 30-32),

and on the expressions used in various passages regarding death as being a "descent" into the grave, or the pit (Ezek. xxxi. and xxxii., &c).

But where it is impossible to reason from analogy, and inspiration is silent, it is surely the best not to attempt to speculate. We will therefore only observe that it scarcely seems consistent with the illimitable resources of the Almighty in the unbounded firmament, nor with the glorious condition which we have seen that some of the departed spirits enjoy, that it should be His will to confine all, both good and evil,—myriads upon myriads as they must number from the foundation of the world—within so small an area, as the interior of our globe can be conceived to admit. If probability is to guide us, it would rather be in favour of suggesting an infinite variety of destinations for the spirits of the dead, as was pointed out in an earlier chapter. This latter remark may furnish also a clue to answering the next question, viz. :

2. *Are they in a state of sleep?*

It seems impossible to deal with this inquiry fairly, without allowing that there may be great dissimilarity in God's disposal of the



spirits of men after death. "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth," says the Saviour Himself (John xi. 11). "We shall not all sleep," says St. Paul (1 Cor. xv. 51), and "Them that sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him" (1 Thess. iv. 14), together with numerous other passages, seem to stand in contradiction to the account of Dives and Lazarus, and to the other spirit-scenes which we have reviewed. Eminent commentators have taken opposite sides in discussing the point, but with the utmost respect for their authority, a middle view will, perhaps, be the only one to compass the difficulty.

There can be no doubt to a faithful reader of the Bible that the intermediate state will be one of rest, as compared with the ceaseless turmoil of earthly life, and of quietude in comparison with the active existence to follow afterwards in heaven. The state of sleep on earth is one which varies from a condition of absolute unconsciousness to one in which the mind or spirit is extremely active, although the body may remain dormant. There is also the yet higher state of consciousness of the spirit independently of the body, called a trance. To draw an analogy from this might

be deemed a partial yielding of the position we took originally ; but it is not meant to be too closely pressed, while at the same time it may probably assist a not incorrect conception of what is confessedly obscure, so far as our present knowledge extends. It is not likely that in any instance the spirit will be absolutely unconscious after death ; and in the case of those who are not saved, there may possibly be an increased keenness of sensibility, as we remarked before.

3. *Do they undergo any change ?*

This question might lead us into a wide field of controversy. Nevertheless, it shall be avoided, if possible. Our object is different from that, as will long since have been discovered by the reader. The doctrines of purgatory, of prayers for the dead, and of final universal redemption, for example, may naturally be expected to receive attention here ; but we cannot do more than allude to them, without departing from the simple and practical line of remark which we have determined to follow.

In the Book of Psalms (lxxxviii. 5, 10, 11) we are taught that there is no change to be hoped for in the grave, and from the parable

of Dives and Lazarus we see that, even where the lost soul was concerned for the salvation of others, there was no chance of redemption for his own. "They which would pass from hence to you cannot ; neither can they pass to us that would come from thence." Of whatever nature the "great gulf" might be which even spirits could not cross over, it is quite certain that an utterly impassable barrier is meant. With the exception of one or two texts which are extremely hard to explain, and notably in St. Peter's 1st epistle (iii. 19) where Christ is said to have preached to the "spirits in prison"—of whom more will be said in a future page—we can find no warrant in the Bible for supposing that any change is permitted or possible of a kind which could bring salvation, as would have been the case during life. Remorse, as was manifest in Dives, will be common enough ; but no repentance that could effect reconciliation with God. It is very painful to have to say so. To be able to pray for the souls of the departed would doubtless be a great consolation in many cases. If, however, the tree must lie as it has fallen, it becomes little short of disrespect to the Almighty to offer such peti-

tions, being wholly uncountenanced by the inspired word which he has placed in our hands for guidance.

In another but different respect we may likewise anticipate with tolerable certainty that no alteration will be made. We shall know each other hereafter in the same stage of life as that in which each has quitted the mortal body. The old, although relieved from bodily infirmities, will not have returned to their youth, for the influence of past events upon the mind cannot be undone, and each progressive period of existence leaves an indelible stamp behind it ; nor will the infant have attained the maturity which greater advance in life would have given, albeit it will probably be gifted with powers of communication which it did not possess before death. To suppose the result otherwise would be to destroy the marks of identity, and to prevent that mutual recognition upon which so much of our future prospect of happiness depends. How true is the idea of the ancient painters who peopled their delineations of heavenly scenes with little cherubs ! How greatly must their numbers exceed those of all other redeemed souls put together !

But to proceed further,

4. *Are the saved and the lost in communication with each other?*

From the parable of Dives and Lazarus we might be led at first to give an affirmative reply. But reflection will rather induce the conclusion that the conversation was introduced into the narrative for the purpose of conveying to the hearers certain momentous truths in an impressive manner. The hopelessness of any attempt being made on the part either of the saved or of the lost to interfere with the other was obviously the chief doctrine disclosed; and, next to this, God's determination not to allow any return of the departed spirits to the earth beyond that which was in His almighty foreknowledge resolved upon for allwise purposes of good to mankind. As it was made apparent by the parable that a condition of misery and suffering, more or less aggravated, is the lot of unsaved spirits in Hades, and that the redeemed souls are in an opposite and totally dis severed situation, to imagine communications passing between them would be as futile as it would be improbable.

5. *Is there any knowledge among them of what is passing upon earth?*

We are disposed to think that there is. Abraham is represented in the parable as saying to the rich man, touching his brethren, "They have Moses and the prophets." Yet neither Moses nor the prophets lived until long after Abraham had gone to his rest, therefore he could not be supposed to allude to them without possessing a knowledge of events which had happened subsequently to his own entry into the place of departed spirits. Samuel and Moses and Elijah also appear to have been in greater or less degree conversant with what was taking place on earth. Again, what is said in Rev. vi. 9—12 of the souls under the altar crying for judgment against "them that dwell on the earth," acknowledges a condition of interest in and acquaintance with things going on among men on the part of those who were manifestly in the Intermediate State. Such knowledge might, no doubt, be a special favour to the eminently righteous and to martyrs. Still there is nothing inconsistent with what we know of the Intermediate State in the notion that the spirits therein may be

enabled to learn somewhat concerning those from whom they have been parted for a time.\*

6. *Have the spirits power to appear to mankind if they desire to do so?*

This is a very debateable question. Many good people believe that they can and do appear. Holy Scripture does not clearly indicate an answer, except in so far as that, by careful perusal of the New Testament as compared with the Old, we may observe that a decided change prevailed after the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the system which had been in force during the previous ages. Appearances of angels apparently ceased altogether with the times of the apostles, and those of spirits seemed to be decreased if not entirely suppressed.† Testimony of a description which we are bound to hesitate in doubt-

\* The texts in favour of an opposite view are Eccles. ix. 5, Job xiv. 21, and Isa. lxiii. 16; but, after critical examination, they do not seem to outweigh the passages above referred to.

† This is probably alluded to in Heb. ii. 5, "Unto the angels hath He not set in subjection the world to come;" where the Greek literally means the *immediately coming dispensation*, *i.e.*, the age following after Christ's death.

ing has indeed been advanced to prove individual instances of spiritual appearances in more recent periods. Contrasted, however, with the accounts in the Bible there is a shadowy and transparent character about these later manifestations which almost stamps them with an air of unreality. At the same time, when we acknowledge that it has been the will of the Almighty to alter the frequency of intercourse with the world of angels and spiritual beings which existed antecedently to the advent of His Son upon earth, it is not for us to insist that He may not have designed to still permit a less tangible but not less true visitation occasionally of disembodied souls to men. The asserted haunting of particular spots by individual spirits, if not imaginary, can only be regarded as exceptionally punitive to those spirits.

It would be easy to add more upon this subject. Thoughts crowd into our mind, and if they had a basis of authority they should receive utterance. But our endeavour has been to express only such opinions as might be supported by the declarations in Holy Writ, or reasonably deducible therefrom. And if our readers do not find all the light they



hoped for upon topics little understood, and not much brought forward till of late years, we can but urge them to a deeper search in the same fountains from which we have imperfectly drawn. In the remaining portion of this book the life to come after resurrection will occupy our attention, and the ideas connected with that glorious theme will carry us further away from scenes and beings of earth. Eternity, and not the interval immediately succeeding death, was the great object of hope and rejoicing to those holy men who, from the personal teaching of the Saviour's lips and the revelations of inspiration to their own minds, knew more of the future than any among ourselves ever attain to in this world. While, therefore, the proximate destination and condition of our souls and spirits naturally awakens a very deep interest, the main anxiety and the main thought should always rest with that which lies beyond. To secure the inheritance of heaven itself, the heaven—where-soever it be—from whence those who enter it shall never be disturbed, was the object of the sacrifice of the cross and of all Christ's sufferings for man. To the same bourne should our every effort be directed ; so shall it be ours to

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rejoice securely in the prospect of presently attainable repose for the ransomed soul, and of ever-expanding happiness at length in the eternal heaven of heavens.



. . .

## The Angels of Light.

. . .

“ ~~THE~~ child-like faith that asks not sight,  
“ Waits not for wonder or for sign ;  
“ Believes, because it loves, aright—  
“ Shall see things greater, things divine.  
  
“ Heaven to that gaze shall open wide,  
“ And brightest angels to and fro  
“ On messages of love shall glide  
“ Twixt God above and Christ below.”

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE ANGELS OF LIGHT.

Life After the Resurrection—Our Saviour's Comparison of the Risen Souls to the Angels—Difficulty of Conceiving a Body Material and yet Imperishable—Man Created only a "Little Lower than the Angels"—Nearest of Connection how Proved—Early Appearances of Angels to Mankind—Becoming Less Intimate as Time went on—History of the Fall of the Angels—Arguments in Favour of its being Correct—Manna designated "Angels' Food"—Concluding Inferences.

IN attempting to form an estimate of the nature of the life to come after the resurrection—in other words, during the ages of eternity—many considerations present themselves. We have to ascertain what we shall ourselves be, and in whose society and where we shall be placed. We may likewise draw from each of these inquiries a variety of interesting points of reflection. When a mockingly imagined difficulty connected with the resurrection was offered for solution to our blessed

Saviour by Jewish sectaries, who did not believe in the doctrine, the answer given by Him was summed up in the remarkable words, "But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world," *i.e.*, the world to come—"and the resurrection from the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are *like unto the angels*, and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection"—*literally* translated "*sons of God, being the sons of the resurrection*"—(Luke xx. 36). An approximate idea of the spirit's condition after resurrection was thus unfolded, and though other evangelists have recorded Christ's words with the slight variation that the redeemed shall be simply "as the angels," they confirm the testimony of St. Luke, in fact, the sense of each expression being the same. Before turning to other sources of information, therefore, let us fully examine this. It will abundantly repay our endeavour.

The materiality, and yet imperishability, of the body with which the risen spirits shall be clothed, is the chief feature of life in eternity which perplexes the thought, and diffuses, as it were, into unreality the believer's imaginations of heaven. Some divines attempt to

remedy the drawback by picturing heavenly scenes as more corporeal and earth-like than the Bible gives us authority for doing. Such exposition is only evading an obstacle. But if, on the very highest inspired evidence, we are taught that in the angels we have a pattern of what the risen sons of men shall be in heaven, then may we safely conclude a good deal with regard to our own future from what is on record regarding angelic natures.

Man, as he came first from the hands of his Creator, was made only "a little lower than the angels" (Ps. viii. 5), and the similarity, as well as the connection between him and those highly-favoured beings—the "sons of God," by special privilege—was much nearer than has been commonly supposed. That the visible intercourse formerly allowed from time to time between angels and mankind has, so far as we are aware, ceased entirely during the present epoch of the world's history, was pointed out in the last chapter; but whatever may be the allwise purpose of the Almighty in ordering it so to be, the facts remain upon the sayings of His own word, that in eternity the "children of the resurrection" will be on a par with the angelic

sons of God in nature and in place, and that even in the present age the trials of men are a spectacle of kindly interest, while their salvation is an object of concern into which angels longingly desire to look (1 Cor. iv. 9, and 1 Pet. i. 12).

These general remarks have, however, been often made. We are anxious now to go further, and to prove the closeness of connection and of nature alluded to. Without such proof there will be no advance towards a nearer apprehension of what the life in eternity may be expected to resemble. The accounts of the visits of angels given in the Bible furnish us with one clue, and the story of the fall of some among their number suggests another.†

Whenever angels have shown themselves to the human race, they have appeared to possess material and tangible bodies, whether they were recognised to be angels or not. Full evidence of this was supplied in the earlier periods of Bible history. The three angelic personages who visited Abraham in the plains of Mamre (Gen. xviii.), accepted his hospitality, and *ate of the viands offered them*. The two angels again arriving at the house of Lot in Sodom (Gen. xix). *not only did the same,*



*but abode with the family the entire night*, and evidently conformed to the ordinary usages of human life. Jacob wrestled bodily with an angel in the night previous to his meeting with his brother Esau on returning from Syria, and retained proof of the reality of the contest in the physical injury inflicted upon his thigh.

The diminishing character of these evidences, as time went on, is nevertheless remarkable. When the angel appears to Gideon (Judg. vi. 11, &c). he is offered refreshment, but, instead of eating on its being produced, he has it placed on the rock for a sacrifice, and then sets it on fire with the end of his staff; in the latter act alone a bodily presence being made evident. The angel who supplied Elijah in the wilderness with food and drink (1 Kings xix. 5-8) twice awoke him from sleep by touching him; and in the visions of Daniel we read more than once that a man's hand was made to touch him also, in order to relieve the terror which was inspired by the known presence of supernatural beings. Daniel speaks at the same time of hearing a man's voice. Lastly, we may, perhaps, mention, among the Old Testament appearances, the fingers of a man's hand, which were seen by the amazed

king, Belshazzar, to write his own doom upon the palace wall at Babylon, as described in the book of Daniel. In the time of Christ there was a revival of angelic appearances with some remarkable examples of power over matter, as instanced by the removal of the sealed stone covering the Saviour's tomb in the rock, and by the liberation of St. Peter from prison (Acts xii). There was also the unique fact of the periodical descent of an angel into the pool of Bethesda (John v. 2-5). causing the miraculous cure of diseases by his disturbance of the water. In these several instances substantial proof was afforded of materiality in the angelic form ; in the other and more numerous cases, the only token, so far as we know, was the evidence of man's eye ; sometimes guided by the angels' bright clothing, but never, it would seem, by their having wings, as supposed by many persons.

What has thus been quoted is abundantly sufficient to show that the bodies possessed or assumed by angels were such as would enable them to perform any function of the natural human body. If this were not so, there would be no reason for the exhortation of the Apostle to the Hebrews (xiii. 2). "Be not

forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." Of course there is in these inferences a great deal that is incomprehensible to our understandings. The facts, notwithstanding, comprise everything that is contended for by us. If the Almighty has once already blended in this wise the corporeal and spiritual natures in an angel, He can hereafter effect the same for the risen sons of men, and surely will do so.\*

The history of the fall of the angels lends further support to the belief in similarity of nature and formerly near connection between them and mankind. The particulars are stated in Gen. vi., and are alluded to in other parts of the Scriptures. Yet the true meaning of these passages is not generally understood, nor even suspected, except by those who have studied the older commentaries. Moderns are indebted to the Rev. Dr. Maitland,† author of the "Dark Ages," for drawing attention to the correct interpretation of this wonderful and

\* Observe the parallel between the assent of Manoah's angel in the flame of the sacrifice on the rock, and the taking up of Elijah to heaven in a chariot of fire.

† In his "Eruvin, or Miscellaneous Essays."

warning chapter of Sacred history ; and he shows conclusively from several passages relating to the same event, and by unanswerable reasoning, that the intimacy existing before the Deluge between angels and mankind caused intermarriages to arise, which resulted in evils so terrible as to call for the entire destruction of the race, excepting the family of the righteous Noah, who was said especially to be "perfect in his generations," *i.e.*, of purely human descent.

It must have struck any calm reader of the chapter referred to that the expressions used regarding the anger of God Almighty towards man are stronger than in almost any other part of Holy Writ ; and on looking back to the preceding verses there seems hardly an adequate ground for such, unless the above statement be taken as correct. The words are, "It repented the Lord that He had made man upon the earth, and it grieved Him at His heart ;" but when the full and real signification of the previous verses is perceived, then all is rendered lamentably plain. The angelic sons of God had indeed descended from their "first estate" and "left their own habitation !"

It is hardly within the scope of a work like this to enter into all the arguments of a learned controversy; but as the view just enunciated may be new and startling to the ordinary reader, we will briefly explain the principal reasons for giving it credit. In the first place, according to Dr. Maitland, the ancient Jews—testified by Philo and Josephus—and the chief Christian Fathers\* considered Gen. vi. to relate to the fall of the angels. Then the Hebrew word translated “Sons of God” is the same which is elsewhere applied in the Old Testament to the angels, but never to mankind; and the Septuagint translation of it is “Angels of God.” Further, St. Jude (v. 7), in alluding to the angels’ fall, compares their sin to that of Sodom and Gomorrah,† as being of an unnatural and sensual description. And, finally, this explanation sheds light upon other mysterious passages of inspiration—one especially so will be pointed out hereafter—and upon the strange stories of heathen mythology, which found credence in that part

\* Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Ambrose, Cyprian, Tertullina, and many others.

† See the original Greek text, which is very marked in its application.

of the world near to which the occurrences indicated must have taken place.\* To set aside these arguments upon the presumption that the account is incredible, because deemed impossible, would be to ignore the certain facts proved in this chapter, as to the angels being permitted to assume, or having bodies practically human, and therefore presumably carrying with them the feelings naturally arising from humanity when admitted to a state of close intimacy.

Again, if we simply examine the passages under consideration, there are manifest objections to accepting the common interpretation. We read that the "sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair, and they took them wives of all they chose." The extraordinary contrast drawn between the *sons of God* and the *daughters of men* is one to require some explanation. Guided even by the English version alone, is it not natural to ask, why should not the men and the women of

\* A traditional story is said to linger to this day in the Vale of Cashmere, north of India, to the effect that two angels named Harat and Marat, who came down from heaven as teachers, were tempted by female beauty to abide on the spot.

those days both be classed under the same designation? Should we not expect to hear of the *sons of God* and the *daughters of God*, as in 2 Cor. vi. 18, "Ye shall be my sons and my daughters, saith the Lord Almighty," or of the *sons of men* and the *daughters of men*? Is it fair or reasonable to assume that the young men of that period were, as a whole, so superior in godliness to the young women as to merit being called, in contradistinction to their partners in marriage, "sons of God?" While on the supposition that such was deservedly the case, all the dreadful consequences of their union must have sprung from inherent wickedness on the part of the so-called daughters of men! That there were some very unusual agencies of evil at work to cause the violence and iniquity which afterwards overspread the earth is at least indubitable; and the awful punishments which fell upon both erring angels and erring men cannot be accounted for satisfactorily upon any other theory than that which we maintain to be the true one.

But there is yet another striking statement of the sacred volume from whence our ideas of angels' nature may be influenced. The

Psalmist, in describing the mercies of God to the Israelites in the wilderness, alludes to the manna sent from heaven for their sustenance, and says regarding it (Ps. lxxvii. 25), "Man did eat angels' food;" and the marginal translation of this expression, "The food of the mighty," on being compared with Ps. ciii. 20, confirms us in adopting a literal acceptation of the words. There is no doubt that angels, besides other extraordinary instances of conformity to human nature, have upon earth eaten of men's viands apparently for the purpose of bodily refreshment, and here it would appear that they had a food of their own,\* upon which the Israelites were allowed by Divine favour to subsist. What the term "angels' food" could refer to except the fact of angels having actually fed upon manna, or something akin thereto, is hard indeed to discover. At all events the ordinary explanations of the passage are quite inadequate, and fail to convince our reason.

To conclude, we thus arrive at tolerably certain, even if unexpected, deductions from the circumstances made known to us in the Bible

\* Could it be that the heathen stories of their gods feeding upon ambrosia and nectar were derived from hence?



respecting the Angels of Light; and when we are taught by the Lord Jesus that these angels are an image of what the redeemed shall be in heaven, and when we also find that after His own resurrection and in His risen body, which afterwards ascended to heaven, Christ did Himself both *eat and drink* with His disciples—appealing likewise to their human senses in proof of His body being substantial and identical, even to the very marks of wounds, with that in which He suffered on the cross—it is impossible to avoid the belief that our bodies after the resurrection will be equally conformed to materiality in construction and to powers of sensation like those now enjoyed. How these things can be united with immortality and immunity from bodily weakness or disease, we make no attempt to explain; yet it is not more marvellous than what has been revealed to us regarding the angels, and hence our object in drawing attention to the comparison.

In the following chapter we shall glance at the indications of a darker spirit world revealed to us in the Scriptures.

NOTE.—The author is aware that some of the earlier appearances of angels to the Israelites, from which he has

attempted to draw the inferences above given, have been attributed by several commentators to Christ himself. There may or may not be foundation for the idea—which nevertheless would not interfere with our conclusions—but it seems inconsistent with the place assigned to Christ's mission in the parable of the wicked husbandmen—the Son of the Lord of the vineyard being sent unto them *the last*—and with the assertion in Heb. i. 2, "God hath *in these last days* spoken unto us by His Son ; a contrast being instituted with the earlier messages of God to man, as having passed through other channels. If the Lord Jesus showed Himself to mankind on the occasions referred to, then He must have assumed a human body antecedently to His being made man, for that in which He was crucified and rose again from the dead was developed from the womb, and continuously grew to maturity; a fact which, though not fatal to the view alluded to, certainly takes away from its probability.



**The Powers of Darkness.**

“ SOLDIER rest—but not for thee  
“ Spreads the world her downy pillow ;  
“ On the rock thy couch must be,  
“ While around thee chafes the billow.  
“ Thine must be a watchful sleep,  
“ Wearier than another’s waking ;  
“ Such a charge as thou dost keep,  
“ Brooks no moment of forsaking.  
“ Sleep as on the battle field,  
“ Girded, grasping sword and shield ;  
“ Foes thou can’st not name nor number,  
“ Steal upon thy broken slumber.”

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE POWERS OF DARKNESS.

Satan's Personality—Not a Fallen Angel—Nor his Ministers  
Fallen Angels—Scene Described in Job i.—Satan always  
Allowed to be an Accuser—Yet held under Control—  
Zechariah's Vision—Extraordinary Deference Shown to  
Satan until Christ's Coming—Other Powers of Darkness—  
Daniel's Vision—Satanic Princes of Heathen Realms—  
Danger to Human Souls from Satan's Emissaries—Our  
Duty in Reference Thereto.

HAVING reached that part of our work which treats of the Life in Eternity, it may not be expected that we should have any remark to make on the Powers of Darkness. But we have not yet exhausted the Spirit-scenes of the Bible, and those that remain will suggest several important considerations. One of these scenes is now to be dwelt upon ; it is found in the book of Job, and in it Satan, the chief of the Powers of Darkness, holds a personal and prominent place. Who and what

he is, is little known ; indeed the question has been in modern times so superficially treated, that the very personality of his existence is a not infrequent matter of doubt, and sometimes of absolute disbelief. How such a notion can be reconciled with a belief in the inspiration and authenticity of the sacred Scriptures it is difficult to conceive. Erroneous ideas on this subject, however, are found even with persons not at all disinclined to accept the teaching of the Bible, nor indevout.

Foremost among these errors is that which makes Satan to be a fallen angel, and his agents to be fallen angels likewise.\* We are at a loss to discover from whence the authority for such a supposition is derived. We have never perceived it in the Scriptures ; whereas the extraordinary events referred to in the last chapter ought to dissipate it entirely. If the angels who fell, and whose fall is alluded to by St. Peter (2nd Ep. ii. 4), and by St. Jude (v. 6), be the same who are spoken of in Gen. vi., then Satan, if he fell, must have fallen at an antecedent period, because his evil disposition

\* The excellent author of the "Peep of Day" for children distinctly teaches this idea, and thus early imbues the minds of the young with it.

was displayed in the Garden of Eden to compass the ruin of Adam and Eve. But, in truth, there is no evidence that we are acquainted with to prove that Satan was ever anything different from what he is always represented in Holy Writ, and undoubtedly still continues to be. The expression put into the mouth of the spirits of the nether world in Isaiah xiv. 12, "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning," has been erroneously supposed to indicate Satan's being a fallen angel, but in reality is applied to the King of Babylon, as is quite evident from the context. Nor does the assertion we find that the Prince of Darkness is sometimes transformed into an Angel of Light go beyond showing the versatility of his powers and contrivances for effecting evil; it does not prove that he had once been an angel of light himself. No more did the visible falling of the same individual, respecting which our blessed Saviour spoke when He said, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven," imply that change in the moral status caused by Sin, and which is involved in the term "fallen angel."

Neither can Satan's ministers, *i.e.*, the evil

spirits acting under his leadership, be justly regarded as the fallen angels. In the first place, the number of angels who fell into transgression by their connection with the human race must have been limited, from the circumstance of mankind being comparatively few at the time—at least as compared with modern increase ; whereas the devils are so numerous that one of them in addressing Jesus Christ, said, “ My name is Legion ; for we are many.” In the second place, we are specially informed as to the angels who “ kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation,” that they were placed in everlasting chains, under darkness, to be reserved unto judgment—a figurative expression no doubt, as relating to the “ everlasting chains,” but certainly denoting the most rigorous imprisonment—: the devils, on the contrary, are free to roam over the earth, like their master, and do mischief wherever they can, as the gospel narratives in many instances teach us.

That the power of Satan and his wicked host has been contracted and lessened since the coming of Christ, we have every reason to believe ; even as we have the sure word of prophecy to rely upon that they will ultimately



be overthrown for ever, and subjected to the punishment of their evil deeds. But there is yet an awful reality and tremendous influence resting with these spirits, almost quite forgotten, the Scripture testimony to which it is our duty here to try to realise. Let us turn to the scenes described in the two opening chapters of the book of Job. They are in every respect among the most extraordinary in the whole Bible. Yet the facts are narrated clearly and succinctly, without any semblance of figure or parable. The particulars of each are given in the same words throughout the first part, according to the custom of Eastern narrative.

A solemn assemblage of the powers of heaven is pictured to our sight; the Lord God Almighty is surrounded by angelic hosts, the "Sons of God," approaching His throne to receive His commands, and to announce the fulfilment of His high behests. Among these, as an intruder, and yet not as one unknown, nor occupying a position of inferiority by comparison, Satan comes forward. Instantly perceived, the Supreme Being shows by His first question—"Whence comest thou?"—that the Great Spirit of evil is unwelcome. At

the same time He does not expel Satan from His holy presence, but condescends to open a conversation with him. We need not quote that converse at full length, for its results in setting on foot the trial of God's faithful servant, Job, have no bearing upon our subject ; and the renewal of the portentous scene, after the effects of Job's first losses had been observed, though producing further suffering to Job, does not add materially to the conclusions we are seeking to establish.

We notice, in brief, that on Satan's being asked in what part of the universe he has occupied himself, his reply at once indicated our earth, and that his movements, whether for observation or for mischief, were unceasingly active and universal there.\* The Almighty again inquires whether Job, whose worldly eminence and riches would render him conspicuous, had come under Satan's eye, especially as to his uprightness, his fear of God, and avoidance of evil. "Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in all the earth" ? To which Satan adduces in reply God's many blessings to Job, and the protec-

\* Compare the Apostle's words—"He goeth about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Pet. v. 8).

tion afforded him from danger, but maintains in strong language that if those mercies be withdrawn,—“He will,” saith the Evil One, “curse Thee to Thy face ; doth Job,” he cries again, “fear God for nought” ? That this was a wickedly false accusation was proved by the sequel. It displays, however, the part at all times played by him who uttered it. And the consistency of the narration with the real place, and with the privileged ascendancy of the calumniator in the sphere of the creation, is marked by his giving vent to it.

In Rev. xii. 10, we read, in the unveiling of a long-desired future,—that “the accuser of our brethren is cast down, who accused them before our God day and night.” Nothing can be plainer than that if the great accuser were not admitted to audience of the Almighty, and his accusations heard—albeit not suffered to go beyond a certain length—there would be no deliverance to look forward to, and therefore no cause for rejoicing in its success, as announced in the prophetic declaration of the Apostle. The curse pronounced upon the Devil after the fatal temptation of our first parents, while immediately directed against

the serpent, was remote in its intended application to Satan himself ; the first great blow to his power seeming to have arrived only upon the advent of Jesus Christ to the scene of his dominion heretofore.

We must not omit to notice here that notwithstanding the considerate and almost—if the term may be applied—respectful treatment accorded to Satan in the conference about Job, a strict limit is assigned to his power of inflicting injury on each occasion. “ Behold, all that Job hath is in thy power ; only upon himself put not forth thine hand ”—is the grant to Satan in the first interview ; and in the second, it is, “ Behold, he is in thine hand ; but save his life.” We dare not raise the question why such action should have come to pass on either side ; the origin and the permitted continuance of evil are alike inscrutable to man’s intellect ; but the facts are all-important to a right conception of the subject of this chapter.

In the visions of Zechariah (iii.), which are peculiarly interesting and remarkable, a scene is laid before the prophet’s eye, representing Joshua, the High Priest, standing before the Angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his

right hand to resist him. Now Joshua was the Priest who took part with Zerubbabel, Governor of Judah, and Haggai, the prophet, in rebuilding the Temple of God in Jerusalem, and at the time of Zechariah's vision was a living man ; consequently the incidents related fall into a different category from those depicted to us in the Book of Job. The beautiful representation of Joshua's deliverance from sin is plainly allegorical, and so must the appearance of Satan in the same vision be regarded also.

The introduction of the latter personage is nevertheless quite in accordance with what has been pointed out above. Satan is allowed to place himself boldly in the position of an adversary, ready to countervene, and, if possible, thwart effectually whatever pleadings may be addressed to the Lord by His High Priest, and then is silenced only by the remonstrance, "The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan! is not this a brand plucked from the burning?" A further parallel to which treatment is to be found in the allusion made by St. Jude to the dispute—not at all an allegorical event, as we shall presently show—arising between Michael the Archangel and the Devil, about

the body of Moses ; on which occasion the apostle says that Michael "durst not bring against him (Satan) a railing accusation, but said, 'the Lord rebuke thee.'"

The altered mode of dealing with man's relentless enemy adopted during the mission of Jesus Christ will claim attention in the next chapter. But our notice of the Powers of Darkness would be incomplete were we to close without making allusion to facts perhaps more startling than the privileges and powers anciently enjoyed by Satan. Foremost though he has always been, he neither stands alone nor is unsupported. Spiritual agencies of terrible influence and widely extended sway exist for the maintenance of evil, and are borne witness to repeatedly in the Word of God. St. Paul, in speaking of the Christian warfare, says, "we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of darkness of this world, against wicked spirits (*see marginal reading*) in heavenly places" (Eph. vi., 12) ; and again, in describing the conquest of death by Christ, "Having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in Himself (Col. ii. 15, *see margin*).

The Lord Jesus likewise, at the moment when He was taken prisoner by the emissaries of the Chief Priests in the garden of Gethsemane, wound up His mild remonstrance against the outrage with the words, "This is your hour, and the Power of Darkness" (Luke xxii. 53), that is to say, "This is the time during which your will and that of the power ruling in darkness is to have sway; therefore I may not resist you."

These various passages, supported by others less conspicuous, point unmistakeably to the same conclusion, namely, that evil spirits not only abound, but form a hierarchy of darkness, varying in its degrees of rank. A reference to the Book of Daniel will strongly confirm this opinion. In chap. x., a wonderful vision is recorded as having been sent to Daniel in reward of his self-chastisement, and setting of his heart upon prayer to God at a period of life so advanced that the long fasting he mentions must have been an unwonted trial. The vision was seen under circumstances much resembling that which was vouchsafed to St. Paul on the journey to Damascus, both as regards its terrifying effect upon his companions, and inasmuch as Daniel alone heard

and saw the spiritual personages who appeared, the men accompanying him having in extreme alarm fled to hide themselves. The name of the angel who addressed himself to the prophet is not revealed, but that he must have been of high standing is shown by his words. After the comforting assurance to the trembling Daniel that his prayers had been heard, and that the angelic being had come in answer to them, the latter proceeds to say (v. 13), "But the Prince of the Kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days"—the exact time of David's protracted fast and prayer—. "But, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me." Then having concluded the remainder of his message, the angel winds up with these words—"And now I will return to fight with the Prince of Persia : and when I am gone forth, lo, the Prince of Grecia shall come. But I will shew thee that which is noted in the Scripture of Truth ; and there is none that holdeth with me in these things, but Michael your Prince."

The more we reflect upon this passage the more we are struck with the marvellous revelation it contains. Who were these princes that



are severally spoken of? Certainly not earthly rulers, for the mention of "Michael, your prince," renders it clear that they were not.\* The Jews were at the time in captivity at Babylon, and they had neither there nor in their own land a prince of that name. Michael is acknowledged to be the archangel, to whom, from this mention and from that in Dan. xii. 1, it would appear that the care of the Jewish nation was particularly confided. The Prince of Persia, being the opponent whose resistance prevented an answer from being brought by the angel to Daniel's prayers, and who was only overcome by the aid of an archangel, must have been the Satanic hierarch of that idolatrous kingdom; and the Prince of Grecia, another realm of idolatry and sin, being, as the context seems to indicate, one who would not follow the "Scripture of truth," must have been also one of Satan's ministers. We may,

\* There is considerable difference of view on this point among commentators, it is true, as is well expounded by Benson; but there is strong authority in favour of the explanation to which we adhere, and which is evidently the most in accordance with the context. Some would also interpret the allusion as being to good angels instead of evil ones; but the idea of strife going on thus between guardian angels is, as Scott points out, absurd.

indeed, reasonably suppose that all over the Pagan world there were similar mighty workers for the Devil to be met with ; and the universality of their presence and dominion is, in fact, made manifest by the declaration of the angel that none "held with him" excepting the spirit Prince of the Jews.

One of the greatest sources of danger to human souls arises from the countless number of Satan's fellow-workers. He cannot be himself omnipresent nor omniscient ; to acknowledge these attributes would be to place him on a level with Jehovah. But the ceaseless activity characterized by the Evil One in his own words, "going to and fro in the earth," aided by so many emissaries, renders him a foe whose machinations we can never sufficiently dread. In Rev. xvi. 14, we read of "the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle." Great wars are surely among the most desired achievements of evil spirits, for no other calamities produce a larger amount of present misery nor send so many souls into another world without even a moment's preparation. To bring about this must always

be the aim of Satan—every one so ruined forming an addition to his subjects, willing or unwilling.

Whether the power over the bodies of men exercised by devils in past ages, and so greatly checked by Christ and His apostles after Him, still exists or not, is impossible for us to determine. Some forms of madness and some cases of crime might not unreasonably be attributed to the self-same "possession" as is described in the New Testament. That which unfailingly becomes our duty is to realize the proximity unseen of ever-watchful enemies, and by employing the means of defence prescribed in the Divine Word against these Powers of Darkness (2 Eph. vi. 11—18), to make sure that our lot be not cast in with theirs as souls lost for the ages of eternity. The great victory of our blessed Lord and Master over Satan and his legionaries will next occupy our thoughts in its connection with the life to come.



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**Jesus and the Resurrection.**

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“ SLEEP’ST thou indeed ? or is thy spirit fled  
“ At large among the dead ?  
“ Whether in Eden bowers thy welcome voice  
“ Wake Abraham to rejoice,  
“ Or in some drearier scene, thine eye controls  
“ The thronging band of souls ;  
“ That as thy blood won earth, thine agony  
“ Might set the shadowy realm from sin and sorrow free.”

## CHAPTER X.

### JESUS AND THE RESURRECTION.

St. Paul's Teaching at Athens—Temptation of our Blessed Lord—Dr. Bartle's View of the Atonement—Christ's Work really a Complex One—Frequent Contest with Spirits of Evil during His Ministry—Victory over Satan in the Wilderness—Difficulty of Explaining 1 Peter iii. 19—New Interpretation Proposed—Jesus Christ after His Resurrection—In what Respects an Example of that of Mankind.

ST. PAUL'S teaching at Athens was comprised in the title of this chapter. The unbelieving Athenians for that reason declared him to be a "setter forth of strange Gods." So much had been said about resurrection that a partial hearing and not very surprising misconception of new doctrine had led to the supposition that "resurrection" was the name of some strange deity linked with that of Jesus. This fact shows the remarkable prominence assigned to the resurrection of Christ in the apostle's preachings. In truth,

upon it all our hope rests and centres, as it were. "If Christ be not raised," saith the apostle, "your faith is vain." And from the accounts given us of the Lord Jesus after He rose from the dead, we obtain the clearest idea anywhere to be met with of what the risen body and the risen life may be expected to be.

But we cannot properly touch upon this until after we have reviewed the dealing of the Son of God with the spirit world ; for by overthrowing Satan He gained for us the glorious prospect of resurrection. The grandest spirit-scene we have yet glanced at lies before us in the temptation of our blessed Lord by the devil during his forty days of fasting in the deserts of Judæa. There is here no allegory to unfold, but a true and living contest, to end in Satan's first, complete, and memorable defeat.\* Contrasted with what we have before seen in Job, how different is the manner of reception the Tempter encounters when he dares to assail the Divine Majesty itself !

\* Fulfilling, at length, the prophecy pronounced in the Garden of Eden, that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head (Gen. iii. 15).



How totally at variance was the issue to the tempted One !

A recent writer, to whom we have more than once referred already, has urged that the earth was not the scene of Christ's atonement for mankind, and that the actual expiation of man's sin did not take place on the cross, but was effected by Christ's sufferings in Hades. Many arguments more or less convincing are offered by Dr. Bartle to prove this ; and there is no doubt that the agony in the garden of Gethsemane, and upon the cross itself, pointed to something more dreadful in anticipation than the bodily pains and death by torture which our Saviour was about to undergo.

Our view of Jesus Christ's work is that it was a *complex* work, involving not only a single act of redemption, but an entire career of more than thirty years' sacrifice of self, and an offering to His heavenly Father of deeds done both in the flesh and in the spirit. The forty days of fasting and temptation in the wilderness were no less important to mankind than the forty days spent on earth after resurrection and before ascension. Nor do we for a moment hesitate to believe that the interval He spent—not improbably most painful to

endure—among the spirits in Hades, was an essential part of the atonement our Redeemer undertook to make. The danger lies in dwelling too forcibly upon any special point to the non-recognition of others, no one of which can be imagined unnecessary to perfect the reconciliation between God and men. The words of Christ upon the cross, "It is finished," must indubitably, as Dr. Bartle says, have meant to announce the completion of the various prophecies\* regarding His death, and not the ending of all that He had to suffer and achieve. The Prince of this world, he who had the power of death, was yet to be mastered in his greatest stronghold, the grave, and forced to yield back again both body and spirit which he would fain have detained for ever.

The contest with the spirits of evil was very marked all through the ministry of Christ. In no part of the Bible are they mentioned so frequently as in the four gospels. Over and over again we read of victories gained in their expulsion from those possessed by them,

\* The giving of vinegar to drink, casting lots for his raiment, &c.

not only by the Lord Jesus, but by his apostles and disciples, through power conferred from Himself. These lesser spirit-scenes are so numerous that we can merely allude to them in passing.

But Christ's temptation in the wilderness was an event of paramount interest and importance to mankind. We need not assume that the particulars were so brief and soon concluded as in the descriptions supplied by the evangelists ; they, indeed, under inspiration, or from the lips of their Lord Himself, summed up all that we were required to know in the way of general belief. It is considered most probable, however, that the individual temptations were extended and pressed by every argument or incentive possible, and thus that the termination of each might not have been speedily arrived at.

All the features of the gospel narrative are so well known that there is no necessity for a review of them in equal detail with those spirit-scenes in the Old Testament to which we have called our readers' attention. Yet it could hardly—we may observe—be possible, that Satan anticipated the infliction of so dire a check upon himself. His rule upon earth

had been all but universal for many ages, and if he had beheld the fall of angels, most probably by his own machinations, he might, in the fulness of presumption and pride, have conceived that even the Son of God, when in human flesh, would yield to his seductions. The "lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life" might each be expected to prevail; but they were in succession tried, and tried in vain. Then at length was Divine power called forth to close the trial so fully and fearlessly endured, and a command was issued for his departure, which the Tempter dared not disobey.

At this point we cannot forbear to notice an inspired statement, bearing both upon the Intermediate State and upon the relations of our Redeemer with the spirit world, but which has never received any satisfactory explanation. We almost hesitate to add another to the many interpretations already attempted; and if we do so, it is not with the intention to dogmatize. We merely offer a suggestion in unison with the train of thought which has been developed in these pages.

St. Peter (1 Ep. iii. 19, 20), when speaking of the sufferings of Christ from man's sin and

of His death in the flesh, adds that "*in the spirit*" Jesus "went and preached unto the spirits in prison, which sometime were disobedient, when once the long suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a-preparing." Now, were it not for the declared limitation of Christ's thus preaching in Hades only to those spirits who disobeyed God in the days of Noah, this text would be enough to have altered all our doctrine derived from Scripture regarding the status of departed human souls. Once admit that souls previously ignorant of, or opposed to the gospel, were able to hearken to its preaching after death, and we open the door to schemes for universal redemption, not without reason based on the possibility of their communicating the glad tidings from one to another when conversions had begun to be experienced by the departed.

To obviate so inevitable an inference, Dr. Bartle has proposed to translate the Greek word—though always used in the New Testament with the same signification—as if it were "announced" instead of "preached," quoting a passage from Euripides in support of the proposition. We are unable to follow his

reasoning. Setting aside the inexplicable selection of the antediluvian souls for the "announcement" of a salvation wrought for mankind in general, the question will infallibly be asked, "If the unhappy spirits had no power to profit by it, why should such an announcement be made at all?" Might they not be supposed to answer what would seem a painful mockery to them, in the apprehensive language of the devils by the Lake of Galilee (St. Matt. viii. 29), "Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?"

Taking the words, however, in their ordinary meaning, the difficulty calls for explanation of some kind. Why should the souls of Noah's contemporaries alone enjoy the privilege of Christ's preaching? Had they not rejected Noah himself, who was a preacher of righteousness in his day; and were there not countless multitudes of other souls who in life had had no opportunity of learning the truth, and who might therefore be thought to have a prior claim? We do not raise these questions by way of cavil at the statement of God's Word. If either of the usual interpretations can be proved to be correct we are prepared to accept it, and wait for a solution of the mystery

hereafter. What we have to suggest is that the "spirits in prison" may mean the *angels who fell from their first estate*, as related in Gen. vi.

To pass by this suggestion as fanciful and unworthy of being examined would not be just. The expressions employed by the apostle, as regards these spirits—"sometime disobedient," and now "*in prison*"—are not like the terms elsewhere used in reference to the lost souls of men; but they do resemble strongly the descriptions applied to the spirits of the fallen angels in each of the passages where the latter are mentioned (2 Pet. ii. 4, Jude v. 6 *in original*). An impartial comparison will be found very striking as to this. The imprisoned spirits are, no doubt, said to be "reserved unto judgment;" but such a declaration would not prevent the possibility of a portion of them being saved any more than the statement of St. Jude (v. 4) in regard to certain wicked men, that they were "before of old ordained to this condemnation," would preclude the repentance unto salvation of some few individuals, as in similar instances.

Nor need it be deemed incredible that the Almighty Creator of angels and men might in

His universal goodness provide a chance of redemption for spiritual beings who fell into temptation through their connection with the human race. God's providence does not extend to man alone of all created things; and His Son's redeeming love might surely, though in manner alike unknown to and uncomprehended by us, be the means of rescuing at least some of His once favoured ministering agents from the everlasting perdition they had earned by sin. At any rate, to our mind the idea conveys a possible solution of a considerable difficulty, and one less inconsistent with the context, and with the rest of the Bible, than any hitherto propounded. It may at least be received as a fair subject for critical discussion.\*

\* In the margin of our Bibles a reference will be found from 1 Pet. iii. 19 to 1 Pet. iv. 6, where the apostle says—in the original Greek—"For this cause was the gospel preached to the dead;" (*authorised version*, "Them that are dead.") This text may perhaps be alleged as contravening the explanation we have proposed for the first-named passage. Dean Alford, in his Greek Test., has written a long annotation upon it, and the sense is avowedly most difficult to ascertain. Nevertheless, it need not be held to refer to the "spirits in prison," of whom St. Peter spoke previously. "The dead" is a general expression, and whether it signifies, as Alford takes it, those



When the Lord Jesus returned from His sojourn in the realms of spirit life—whatever He may have done or suffered during the awful interval—He returned triumphant. Death and hell were both disappointed of a hoped-for victim. The rising of Christ from the dead was the culminating point of man's redemption. For not only did He of His own power call back His own spirit from the regions of Hades, but the very body in which He had lived and died was rescued from the grasp of one whose special vocation appears to be to corrupt and destroy, physically as well as spiritually.\*

Jesus Christ's return to earth afforded us,

*out of the body*, or, as the translators of the Bible interpreted it, those *in the body yet spiritually dead*, the term must include the *entire class* of those alluded to, whichever they be. The "spirits in prison," on the other hand, are shut out from such general acceptance, because St. Peter so positively affirms that their disobedience occurred in the time of Noah, and antecedently to the Deluge, as we have pointed out above. It may be added that the Greek word for "preached" in each of the two texts is quite different, thus increasing the likelihood that they are intended to refer to different facts.

\* Compare the Lord's words regarding the deformed woman healed by Him on a Sabbath day—"Whom Satan hath bound, lo ! these eighteen years" (St. Luke xiii. 16)

as has been remarked already, the nearest example of the promised resurrection of the redeemed ; yet, in some particulars, it differed apparantly from that which is to come. Our heavenly Father did not permit His "Holy One to see corruption" ; that is to say, His human body was not resolved into the original elements before being resumed ; and in remaining upon earth in occasional intercourse with individual men and women, even to the extent of eating and drinking with them (Acts x. 41), there must—we should think—have been a variation from the life we may expect in heaven. The intermixture or conjunction, as it were, of the earthly and the heavenly life during those forty days compels on our part the observance of a distinction.\*

Other features are doubtless the same. The Lord's appearance, in any locality, within doors or without, was not hindered by intervening obstacles of a material kind ; in whatever

\* The Hon. and Rev. W. H. Lyttelton, in his recent book on the "Life of Man after Death," supposes that a change must have taken place in our blessed Saviour's risen body before the final ascension to heaven ; as though it could not be admissible there while endowed with the faculty of receiving food and drink !

company he desired to be present, His corporeal form was seen, though not always alike in appearance (St. Mark xvi. 12) ; and the moment it was His will to depart, He disappeared from human sight and ken. . It is true, indeed, that on some rare occasions similar attributes were exercised by our Lord before His death in the flesh (St. Matt. xiv. 25, St. John viii. 59). But inasmuch as such powers have been shown to be enjoyed by angels, to whose nature ours will be assimilated after the resurrection, there is every reason to believe that the risen servants of Christ will be accorded them likewise.

Our blessed Lord did, besides, upon more than one occasion, show Himself after His resurrection, in such-wise, that until it was His own desire, those who met Him could not recognize Him. In this particular there was probably an exercise of power beyond that which the glorified spirit of man may look forward to attain.

With this remark we may safely draw to a close the chain of evidence we have sought to link together regarding what we shall ourselves be in the life to come. The real and substantial nature of the bodies we shall possess,

together with the marvellous difference there will be between them and those belonging to our present condition, without destroying either identity or recognition, has been proved and illustrated, in so far as we are furnished with materials for doing so. How far these deductions would bear upon the nature of eternal punishment as well as upon the nature of eternal life, would constitute a momentous inquiry, which, happily, is not consonant to the design with which our investigations were undertaken,—albeit we have been led into some dark scenes and discourse of evil beings by the way. The heavenly home and occupation to which the redeemed of mankind will be admitted after rising from the dead, is all that now remains to be spoken of; and in seeking to represent that glorious subject rightly, we shall be guided, as hitherto, not by imagination, but by what has been unmistakably revealed to us by statement or indication from the sacred narrative.

• • •  
• •  
Heaven.

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**“ We have no home but heaven ; we want no home beside ;  
“ O God, our Friend and Father, our footsteps thither guide ;  
“ Unfold to us its glory, prepare us for its joy,  
“ Its pure and perfect friendship, its angel-like employ.”**

## CHAPTER XI.

## HEAVEN.

Visions of Heaven in "Revelations"—Not Same as Spirit-scenes already Reviewed—Locality of Heaven not Revealed—Sir D. Brewster's Idea—Probable Meaning of "New Heavens and New Earth"—Physical Blessings of Heaven—Question as to Animal Creation—Various Classes of Living Beings Likely—Occupation of the Redeemed—Reflections as to Lost Souls—By including Infants, Majority of Human Race Saved—Spiritual Charms of Heaven.

THE home-life of the ransomed souls will be our last subject. Its nature and its locality alike furnish food for the most delightful contemplation. Our principal source for deriving scriptural views of Heaven lies in the book of the Revelation of St. John, which is the last in the New Testament; and it might be expected by our readers that the wonderful pictures of spiritual events therein contained would have been included among the spirit-scenes which we have reviewed. That they do not fall into the same category will, how-

ever, be apparent on examining Rev. i., for it is there shown that everything described in the following chapters was still future at the time that St. John was inspired and commanded to write, and thus that the scenes which he witnessed while "in the spirit" were really *prophetic visions*. Those that we have termed "spirit-scenes," and endeavoured to draw ideas from as revealing or portraying man's spirit-life after death, have all been—excepting the parable of Dives and Lazarus—actual occurrences, or what we cannot distinguish from such. In speaking of heaven we have a number of most interesting statements to guide us, but from the fact that the life we seek to depict there has not as yet been called into being—the resurrection not having taken place,—it is clearly impossible for us to proceed on the same grounds as in regard to a spiritual condition of existence already going on.

Where heaven is, or where it will be hereafter, is one of the most frequently-discussed questions; yet it is precisely the one point about heaven of which we know the least, and in truth have only probability to enable us to form any opinion. The Bible nowhere gives



this information. Faith is intended to be brought into exercise in this particular. "In my Father's house," saith the Saviour, "are many mansions—if it were not so, I would have told you—I go to prepare a place for you" (John xiv. 2). In consequence of which declaration, with others of a similar kind, St. Peter (2 Ep. iii. 13) says, "Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." The apostle had alluded previously to the awful cataclysm which is to come to pass ere aught is settled for eternity. He had distinctly announced that the earth upon which we now dwell is to be destroyed by fire, and a change to be made in the surrounding firmament that we behold with our eyes. And having warned every reader and hearer, St. Peter straightway appeals to the Lord's promise that, "new heavens and a new earth" are to follow the dread calamity.

Sir David Brewster, in his most attractive book, "*More Worlds than One*," has reasoned upon the high probability of some other and larger orb than the earth becoming the heaven for eternity, which the redeemed are to inherit, and has particularly noticed the physical

impediments to a reconstruction of the earth presumable from the immense multitudes of risen bodies requiring space to move in ; because the numbers of those who have lived and died upon the earth's surface exceed so incalculably what it could contain at any one time together ; but he has omitted to recognise the vast diminution by reason of lost souls, for whom allowance must be taken, and for whose reception provision will have to be made elsewhere. Were it possible, from the light God's Word has afforded us upon the latter subject—painful as it is—to say anything clearly indicating the future, a considerable modification might be effected in our views as to the probable destiny of the earth. There is, however, no foundation for any attempt to theorise in respect to this ; while in fact the expression, “new heavens and a new earth” seem to suggest that heaven will be a sphere wholly different and removed from man's original dwelling-place. For seeing that by the word “heavens” in the text quoted, we of course understand the visible firmament surrounding the earth, and as the destruction or reconstruction of the earth need not and probably would not involve any

change in the many and vast heavenly bodies so far distant from us, we might naturally enough conclude that the new heavens, which we should look upon from the new earth forming heaven, would mean spheres of which we have no ocular prospect now, and thus that the said new earth placed among them would be at a distance from the locality of our present world, and quite distinct in itself.

However this may be, there is no doubt that whatever dwelling-place it may please our Almighty Benefactor to assign for us in heaven, it will contain blessings such as "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive." Among the particulars actually mentioned (Rev. xxi. 23, 25) are that there will be no need for the light of sun or moon, and that there will be no night in heaven. Bodily infirmities and bodily decay will have ceased; therefore rest will not be required to re-invigorate the system, and the mundane ordinance of night, so essential to our present condition, and yet accompanied with so many evils, will be terminated. For a different reason will the sun's light and the moon's radiance be no more. Nearness to or distance from the

material sun will not signify. When God's actual presence is seen, and brightens all admitted into its glory, there will be an inherent light superior to that of sun or moon, equally brilliant, and more satisfying to every physical and intellectual sense.

Such will be the light destined to illumine the new Jerusalem. A beautiful description of the latter place is set before us, with details bearing the most interesting semblance of actuality, amongst these being the enumeration of a variety of precious stones, whose lovely hues taken together form the prismatic colours, according to a recent American writer. Besides which, there is the river flowing from the throne, and the tree of life planted alongside of its crystalline waters for the "healing of the nations;" the converse of Paradise in the first days of our race, where the tree of life was withheld from man's touch after his fall, "lest he should eat thereof, and live for ever."

All this we are told, and withal that the seas which separate the inhabitants of our hemispheres one from another, and swallow up so many of those bodies which, at the resurrection, are to be called forth anew, shall in

heaven be seen no more. Yet we dare not receive these particulars in a perfectly literal aspect, any more than we durst so treat the marriage supper of the Lamb, spoken of in connection with the closing scenes of the present dispensation.\* Substantial realities are pre-figured, though they may not hereafter prove so earth-like as the imperfectness of mortal intellects renders it necessary to represent them now. Still the simple-minded need never be uneasy at not being able to comprehend these things more fully, for there will be no disappointment of their pre-conceived expectations in heaven, except that of discovering far more to reward them than it was possible in this world to imagine.

\* It appears to us nothing less than irreverent to not only materialise but adapt the descriptions of heaven to our modern notions, as is done, for instance, by the authoress of the well-known "*Gates Ajar*," who gives her readers to expect houses, implying inclemency of weather (!) in heaven, and pianos to play upon! While for literal straining of the inspired text, we may instance the idea of the author of "*Things to Come*,"—a pamphlet published in Scotland—who says that we may expect to see cripples in heaven, because our Saviour declares it "better to enter into life halt or maimed, than having two hands or two feet to be cast into hell-fire" (*Matt. xviii. 8*).

One feature in the representations of the world to come strikes us as remarkable, and that is that nowhere does any allusion appear to be made to animals such as exist with man upon earth. It has been taken for granted, indeed—partly from Eccles. iii. 21, where the spirits of man and beast seem to be placed in contradistinction as to their ultimate destination—that animals, from the fact of their not possessing souls like ours, could not be included in the life hereafter. There has been well nigh a revulsion of feeling experienced at the bare idea being suggested, as though the possible participation of inferior members of God's creation in the future life would be to degrade man's position, and to render Paradise itself less heavenly.

Such thoughts are not consistent with a reverent belief in Almighty goodness, nor with careful observation of His ways. In the first place, the beauty of natural scenes on earth is so enhanced by and dependent upon the varied forms of animated life that it is scarcely possible to conceive that no created living beings lower than angelic would adorn the celestial habitations of the blessed. In the second place, when we observe the constant and often

unmitigated sufferings so undeservedly borne by animals, especially domestic ones, at the hands of man, to think that their sentient, albeit dumb, spirits shall never be awarded compensating rest after death, is almost to put a stigma upon the justice of their Creator.

Bishop Butler, in his admirable *Analogy of Religion*, was certainly not averse to adopting our view upon this subject; and its rejection is assuredly more difficult to reconcile with the scheme of creation than its adoption. It is worth while also to observe that from St. John's account (Rev. iv. 6—9), it is evident that animated beings of a description wholly different from anything known to us, and from the angels, will be seen in heaven, besides the cherubim and seraphim of the Old Testament Scriptures. The visions related in the second and following chapters of Ezekiel seem to indicate a similar fact; and high spiritual beings may have been designated by the "morning stars," who sang together in gladness over the creation of our earth conjointly with the angelic "sons of God" (Job xxxviii. 7).

Passing to the occupations of the redeemed

in heaven, it is not in our power to say precisely what they will be. That when the heart shall be perfectly attuned to gratitude for and gratification in everything ordered around, the praise of Him to whom all is owed will be frequent and fervent we may well imagine. That, further, the study and examination of created objects, both material and spiritual, as well as of Almighty regulations and designs, will be alike a pleasure and a resource is equally probable.

But we can hardly suppose the eternal life to consist in nothing more than this. If we are to be like the angels, as has been already shown, there will probably be works of high moment for us to execute, and plans of vast extent in which we shall be engaged. Order and obedience have ever been the rule in heaven, and the angels have been unceasingly employed in offices of ministration for weal or for woe to mankind undoubtedly, and to other beings and spheres in all probability. Almighty power could at any time have carried out the Almighty will without inferior agency ; but if it was deemed desirable to test the obedience of angels thus in time past, it is most likely that the redeemed spirits will have



employments assigned to them in like manner\* and of a like nature.

Nor is this derogatory to the notion of perfect happiness; the heavenly bliss will in great measure arise from the absorption, as it were, of man's will into that of his creator, so that no longer will any antagonism be felt between the command to act, and the desire to obey. The servants of God now find the chief part of their spiritual troubles to proceed from their having two wills to satisfy—the will of the flesh, and the will of the spirit; which, as St. Paul tells us (Gal. v. 17), are “contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.” The saints made perfect can have only one will, and that will cannot but follow the will of their Divine Lord.

The one conceivable drawback to the happiness of heaven we must here allude to once again, although we are unable to explain it away, and must trust solely to our heavenly Father's goodness that it will be in some way neutralized. The absence of some whom in

\* This seems to be proved by a comparison of Rev. xxi. 9, 10, with Rev. xxii. 8, 9, and xix. 10.

life we have known and mayhap loved, but who have failed to avail themselves of the Saviour's atoning sacrifice ere it was too late, suggests a thought of possible pain to the mind. To retain a perfect remembrance of every event of our lives, and yet to forget those lost ones, does appear to our eyes a contradiction—indeed, an impossibility. If anyone can put forward a suggestion to alleviate so trying a reflection, no trivial boon will be conferred on thoughtful believers. Perhaps this remark may draw forth some consolation of the kind. All that we can now offer is the inspired declarations, that "with God all things are possible," and "shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"

Yet in one aspect we may comfort ourselves with the idea that the majority of the human race will be saved; for if we do but feel assured that all who die in infancy are, by the mercy of God in Christ, covenanted or uncovenanted, certain of salvation, then will their infinite numbers outweigh the masses of those who, by their wickedness, ignorance, or folly, have excluded themselves from the heavenly pale. It is hardly possible to suppose that infants will in any event be allowed

to perish everlastingly for sins not their own ; and thus a prominent feature in the scenes of heaven will be the myriads of sweet cherubs who in their once lisping helplessness were the objects of our love on earth.

No charm of heaven will exceed that which consists in the unfailing absence of the varied evils resulting from sin. Of this we are made perfectly sure, that no want of our present worldly requirements—the “means of life,” as they are called,—no social exclusiveness, nor sway of injustice, will prevail to cramp the energy and depress the life of the soul, “They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more.” The elements will no longer terrify nor injure, for “neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.” All sustenance needed for the celestial body (1 Cor. xv. 40), and for the risen spirit, will be supplied by the Lamb of God Himself—He that is “in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters.” And lastly, all sorrow, either for themselves or for others, will be entirely at an end, for “God will wipe away all tears from their eyes” (Rev. vii. 16, 17).

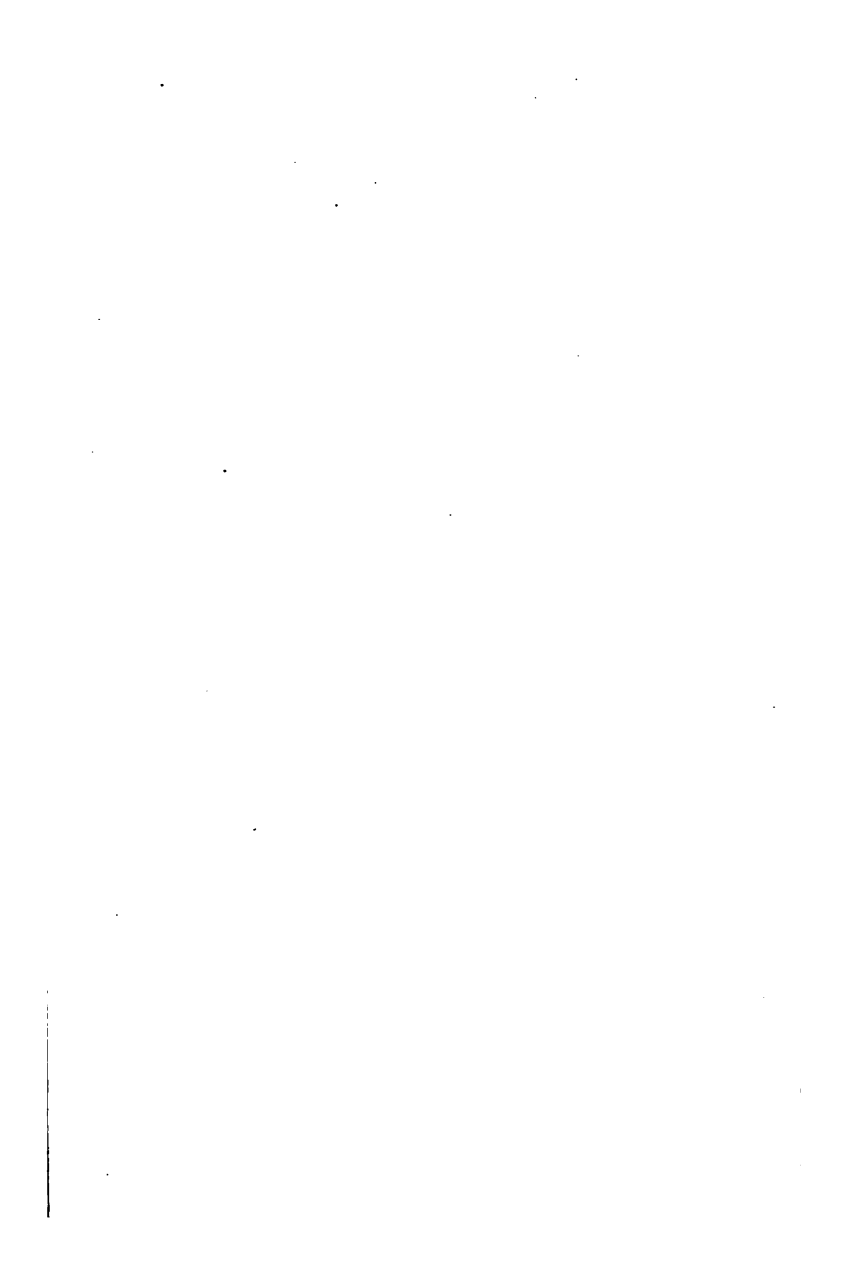
All, therefore, that to the sin-burdened and

only partially renewed feelings of mortality may seem, after every inquiry, matter of strangeness or uncertainty in the world to come, may well be dismissed from the mind. In heaven the friendships which have been founded upon unity in Christ, will be cemented for ever ; the holy kiss (Rom. xvi. 16 ; 2 Cor. xiii. 12) of Christian brotherhood and sisterhood will be given and returned on the meeting of long parted, and not forgetful saints of the Lord. Faith and hope, being no further required, charity in its fairest character of love will rule and guide every thought and deed.

Such will be the haven of our highest anticipations. May we therefore seek it aright, and may it never be ours to hear from heaven the sad words once spoken touching a promised land to a servant of the Most High —“ I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither” (Deut. xxxiv. 4).

THE END.





the 1990s, the incidence of *S. flexneri* has increased in the United Kingdom [10]. In the United States, *S. flexneri* has been reported as the most common serotype in children with acute bacterial dysentery [11].

There is a paucity of data on the epidemiology of *S. flexneri* in the United Kingdom. In the 1970s, *S. flexneri* was reported as the most common serotype in children with acute bacterial dysentery in the United Kingdom [12]. In the 1980s, *S. flexneri* was reported as the most common serotype in children with acute bacterial dysentery in the United Kingdom [13].

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